

# CRACCUM

magazine 05



## stumped by trump?

WELL IT'S YOUR OWN FAULT YOU BASTARDS,  
SAYS DANIEL MEECH. PAGE 25.

## crisis in our backyard

TEJA APPILLA LOOKS AT HOW WE CAN PROTECT  
AUCKLAND'S LARGEST NATURAL RESOURCE. PAGE 18.

## let's get physical

IS RUNNING THE NEW QUINOA?  
HARRIET KEOWN THINKS SO. PAGE 22.



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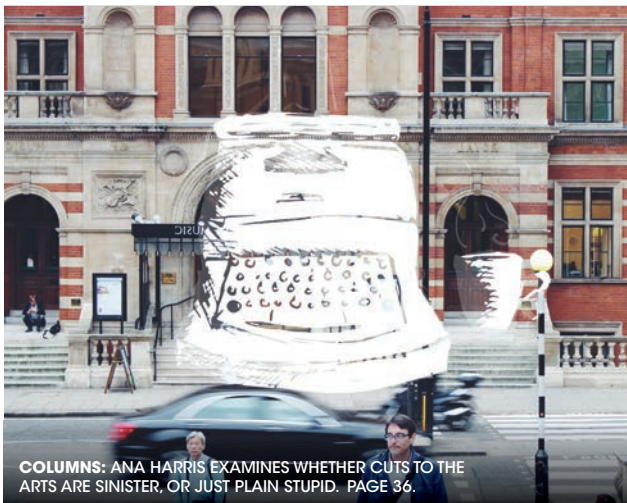
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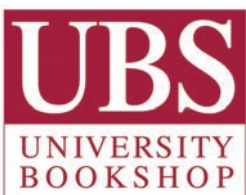
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# mork and miso

(and caitlin too)

CAITLIN AND MARK  
EDITOR@CRACCUM.CO.NZ

Mark fucking loves miso soup. Perhaps it is the new location of the *Craccum* office, directly above UniSushi. Perhaps it is his old age, and subsequent predilection for only the saltiest and least crunchy of foods. Perhaps it is the fact that Mark was once forgotten as a child in the back alley of a Japanese restaurant, left to suckle dregs of miso from rubbish bins before he was found fifteen days later, afraid and slightly scurried.

Regardless, for some reason or another, Mark has developed an insatiable lust for the exquisite combination of miso paste and dashi stock, often garnished with seaweed and diced spring onion. The Nectar of the MSGods. Unfortunately, this multi-cup habit is taking over the day-to-day operation of *Craccum* and getting in the way of our ability to produce a semi-respectable magazine. Editors are bringing flasks of miso to Easter brunches, alienating friends and family and potential contributors. Editors are being woken at obscene hours by other editors wanting to know why there isn't any miso in the pantry. Even something as simple as going to the movies is now ruined by editors complaining to other editors that maybe the money would be better spent on miso instead.

Which brings us, through the most tenuous of connections, to the age-old query: how much miso does it cost to watch a movie?

A fucktonne, as it happens. The following calculations are based on the price of a pack of twelve sachets of instant miso soup from Royal Oak Pak'n'Save (specialty foods, comes in clam, baby clam or wakame seaweed) and the results will leave you gasping for air.

Easter weekend was a particularly cultured weekend for the *Craccum* editorial team, visiting the cinema three times in as many days (we promise we'll stop going on about going to movies together at some point, but today is not that day). First up was *Batman v Superman*, where your editors each sacrificed a full 102 sachets of instant miso for a film which was both disappointing and violent (for both the characters and viewers, check out Samantha's editorial for more info). However, this was a modest miso spend. Had we decided to splash out on a frozen Coke, we would have set ourselves back almost 30 sachets each. Never mind the fact that you could buy FIVE LARGE frozen Cokes at McDonald's for the price of ONE SMALL frozen Coke at Event Cinemas. Absolutely ludicrous. And don't even begin on popcorn. If we wanted to spend stupid amounts of money on snacks with less nutritional value than air, we would be buying miso at St Pierre's.

It is also lucky that Caitlin and Mark are yet to bring a child into this world and were therefore unable to take advantage of the oddly expensive 'bring your baby' offer. We're still not entirely sure what this means, but gather it gives you the choice between 56 sachets of instant miso or having the privilege of experiencing a tiny human shitting itself just as Batman decides Superman isn't too bad after all (but is the real shit in your lap or on the

screen amirite???)

After the miso-draining hell that was Event, the Academy was a welcome respite, costing only 70 sachets of miso for a student ticket. Surely, you exclaim with unbridled excitement, with these 32 extra sachets of miso in the bank you can save on snacks and bring in a tasty thermos full of miso to get you through whatever mildly uncomfortable arty film you have chosen to endure. Right? Right? Wrong, as the Academy specifically requests that you do not bring in any outside food. Cheap bastards.

(kidding we luv u thanx 4 da tickets xosexo)

So, with your misodreams shattered at the door, you have to fork out an extra 23 sachets of miso for a Kapiti Black Doris ice cream. Luckily Black Doris makes fantastic ice cream (#bachelor2k15throwback) so it is 23 sachets well spent, and leaves you with 9 extra cups of miso to enjoy once you get home.

At this stage in the game we had spent a cumulative 390 miso sachets. An entire year's supply of miso, frittered away in mere hours. By the time we had endured *10 Cloverfield Lane* to celebrate the resurrection of our Saviour, we had sacrificed over 500 sachets of miso – a figure which would have been reduced significantly if Mark had just remembered his fucking student ID and hadn't had to pay for an adult ticket.

All in all, our weekend of filmic fun cost half a thousand servings of miso. 506 sachets of unparalleled pleasure and salty excitement. Was it worth it?

Mark says no. He is wrong. ■



## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ATTACKED

PLEASE NOTE: THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE CONTAINS DESCRIPTIONS OF VIOLENCE.

The last couple of weeks have seen a sudden series of violent attacks directed at Asian university students living in and around the inner city.

The attacks – including one right in the middle of Albert Park – have raised concerns about inner city safety, with some people worried that international students are increasingly being seen as “easy targets” by gangs of criminal youths. So far, the assaults have affected six people, all attacked while in public places and mostly during daylight hours.

The first attack took place on the Tuesday before Easter. Two Chinese University of Auckland students were mugged by a gang of around six teenagers in the middle of Albert Park. The pair were punched and kicked by the group and had their hair pulled until the assailants managed to take off with a handbag and a cellphone. Those attacks took place around 8.30pm at night.

Just before midnight the next day, a pair of Japanese university students were mugged near Myers Park. The women were dragged on to the road by their attackers, and then punched to the ground before repeatedly being kicked. Four teenagers, aged between 14 and 15 years old, have been arrested following the attack.

On Thursday morning, a male Chinese student, studying at Unitec and walking to class in Mt Albert, was attacked by a pair of men. The man was beaten viciously and left on the side of the street, with the pair taking his laptop and escaping by car. Photos taken after the assault show the victim’s entire upper body covered in blood.

Finally, the following Monday an international student walking along Khyber Pass Rd was

attacked by another group of youths. A group of kids, the youngest only twelve years old, have been arrested in connection to the crime.

The number of attacks, as well as their severity, has raised some alarm bells. Auckland Mayor Len Brown has requested to be briefed about the assaults and concerns about the safety of international students have been raised with Police Minister Judith Collins.

News of the assaults have been widely shared on social media, with some students feeling scared to go out according to one community organisation. International students often face huge difficulties, such as language and cultural barriers, when it comes to accessing police and community resources. There has been some concern, raised by both community groups and the police, that the attackers are taking advantage of this vulnerability.

Auckland University offers a “security escort” service for students who wish to be escorted both across campus and to nearby bus stops. The service is accessible by contacting +64 9 373 7599 ex 85000 [alternately, dial 85000 on any campus phone]. This service does not appear to cover those who need to cross Albert Park, or who have to walk to the other side of town. However, the University security page does have a list of other recommendations, including that students “be prepared to scream or shout loudly if attacked”, “make sure you know the location of public telephones on campus”, and also “when you are socialising, do not drink too much”.

We have reached out to the University about lighting around campus and other security measures, but were unable to get a response before print date. ■

## FUCKO TAKES BREAK FROM SCRATCHING BALLS, SCRATCHES SIGN



## FLAG FLOP

### NATION CHANGES UNION-JACK-SHIT



After five months, \$23 million dollars, 10,292 submitted designs, and two mail-in voting forms, New Zealand has decided to keep its current flag, complete with outdated colonialist symbolism.

For all the surrounding controversy, the referendum was ultimately decided by a relatively close margin. Only 56% of respondents were in favour of keeping the current flag, with 43% opposed. This is in contrast with polling leading up to the vote, which projected margins of almost 50% at certain points before voting opened. A One News Colmar Brunton poll conducted a week before voting opened had the margin at 37% – with 68% against change, and only 26% in support.

However, despite this closer-than-expected margin, only six of the country's seventy-one electorates were actually in favour of adopting the Kyle Lockwood design. Those electorates were: Bay of Plenty, Clutha-Southland, East

Coast Bays, Ilam, Selwyn and Tāmaki.

Te Tai Tokerau was the electorate most enthusiastic for the current flag, with 78.83% in support. Tāmaki was the most enthusiastic for change, with 51.97% in favour.

Turnout for the second referendum was relatively low – only 67% of those eligible managed to fill out the form and return it to the electoral commission. However, that number is still an improvement of almost twenty percent compared to the first referendum, which only had a 48.78% rate of return.

Political allegiances also appeared to play a major role in the referendum, with electorates with strong pro-Labour populations being far more likely to vote against the flag change than in support, despite the Labour party

themselves having a long history of supporting a flag change.

Prime Minister John Key has described the results of the referendum as “disappointing”. The flag change has been described as a legacy project of his, and the process has received an unusual amount of public criticism and scrutiny – from the cost, to the selection of the flag consideration panel, to the designs selected by that panel, to the exact questions on the referendum forms, to the timing of the referendum forms themselves.

Key says that he believes that the country would be unlikely to have another chance to change the flag any time before we become a republic – something he doesn't believe will happen in his lifetime. ■

**POLITICAL ALLEGIANCES ALSO APPEARED TO PLAY A BIG PART IN THE REFERENDUM, WITH ELECTORATES WITH STRONG PRO-LABOUR POPULATIONS BEING FAR MORE LIKELY TO VOTE AGAINST THE FLAG CHANGE THAN IN SUPPORT**

## REFEREN-DUMB

### EDITORS ROLL OUT “DEMO-CRAZY” PUN, AGAIN.

Since the first MMP election in 1995, there have been eight referenda in New Zealand – five Citizens' Initiated, three from the government. It has now been confirmed in the final vote tally that the latest of these has achieved nothing.

But is this really surprising? If you look at all the referenda conducted since the introduction of

MMP you will quickly realise that none of them have changed anything. Many say that \$27 million was wasted on John Key's pet project; looking back it seems that the same can be said for the rest.

It started with Winston Peters and his campaign to introduce a compulsory retirement savings scheme. This idea was shot down by over 80% of respondents in 1998. Should the money spent on this also be regarded as a waste? The Citizens Initiated Referenda are worse. Each has achieved the desired response, yet not one of the proposals put forward has been explicitly acted upon by the government. In 1998 we were meant to reduce the number of MPs to 99; in 2009 we were supposed to repeal the anti-smacking bill; and there was the crucial referendum in 2013

which told the government that 67% of New Zealanders did not want asset sales. Yet did you hear the opposition benches screaming about wasted money then?

Now jump to 2016 – on the day that it was revealed that New Zealand did not want to change our flag, Peter Dunne said that we need another in 2020. Mr Dunne seems to be presenting us with his own legacy project, a President. He has proposed voting on whether or not New Zealand should retain the monarchy or become a republic. A plan to introduce the most political, non-political position ever. If history has taught us anything, it would be that New Zealanders seem to like the status quo, or at least don't care enough to change anything. ■ PATRICK NEWLAND

# MINIMUM RAGE THE SECOND MOST CONTROVERSIAL 50 CENT

The National Party has approved a small increase to the minimum wage.

Effective from last Friday, the changes raise the minimum wage to \$15.25 an hour – an increase that the government says will affect as many as 150,000 workers across the country, and is expected to result in the distribution of an extra \$75 million worth of wages.

As can perhaps be expected, the fact that the changes aren't major – only raising wage levels by ten dollars a week for a part time worker – hasn't stopped them from being controversial. The main pushback has been from the left, who have long agitated for the implementation of a "living wage" – that is, for a minimum wage of \$18 an hour.

Green Party co-leader Metiria Turei has called on the government to reach that standard by the end of next year, saying that "keeping the minimum wage low keeps wages low overall and families are really struggling to get by" while Labour leader Andrew Little has gone one further, implying that raising the minimum wage to living wage levels is not enough, and would only just cover the increased cost of rent for most people.

The government claims that the 50 cent increase is the largest they could have implemented without causing job losses. Cabinet was advised earlier this year that increasing the minimum wage to \$15.50 an hour would cost between 1500 and 5000 jobs, with increases



beyond that point sharply increasing job losses.

However, there has also been a push back from the economic right, many of whom make the case that minimum wage laws are an inelegant solution to the problems that they try to address. This is a position taken by the ACT Party, who have taken the government to task for what they call "a wage set for the distorted Auckland economy". They have pushed the government to enact legislation that would allow for different minimum wages for different areas of the country. This mechanic has been a recurring motif in recent ACT Party policy.

ACT Leader David Seymour rejects the government's claim that the increase will cost "zero" jobs, saying that "In Auckland, \$15.25 might not sound like much, but small businesses in the regions who generally charge less will struggle to bear the cost. Hikes to the minimum wage will discourage new employment, and lead to more layoffs and business failures."

Another version of that position has been taken by The New Zealand Initiative (NZI), a business-led think tank specializing in "evidence based" analysis of the economy. Doctor of Economics and Director of the Institute, Dr Eric Crampton, advocates for the removal of minimum wage schemes altogether, in favour of selectively protecting the most vulnerable through increasing benefits. "I don't think that there is any problem that is solved by the minimum wage that is not better solved through things like wage subsidies and Working for Families." By doing so,

Crampton says, the government would take the burden of cost off of individual employers and share it equally across all of the country – ostensibly sheltering small businesses and the poor, and extracting the cost from large businesses and the rich.

Both of these policies – ACT's disjointed minimums and NZI's stronger social safety net – obviously require some degree of increased bureaucratic complexity. It is currently not clear what effect these reforms would have on the national economy, and whether or not implementing them would place any warped or counterintuitive incentives on workers.

The primary fear about both is that they increase the risk that those who benefit the most currently from minimum wage changes – students, women, Māori and Pacific workers, people without formal qualifications, disabled workers, and refugees or migrants – would fall between the cracks. Student Allowance levels, for example, are currently adjusted each year to compensate for inflation, but haven't been raised to compensate for increases in living costs for years.

By way of contrast, the Key-lead National government has annually increased the minimum wage on April 1<sup>st</sup> of every year since they first came into power, with the increases consistently being between 25 cents and 50 cents each year. This is the third year in a row that a full 50 cent increase has been implemented. ■

## ONE HAND GIVETH, THE OTHER TAKETH AWAY

Minimum wage earners may find themselves slightly better off following increases to both the minimum wage and starting-out wage from April 1, but students won't receive as much of an income boost as they might have hoped.

The adult minimum wage went up 50 cents to \$15.25 per hour, and the starting-out wage increased 40 cents to \$12.20 per hour. However, no changes have been made to either the student loan repayment threshold (which has remained unchanged since 2009) or the amount students on a student allowance are able to earn before their allowance is cut back.

There has also been no increase to the amounts paid out for student loan living cost payments, student allowances (except for students with

children), or other financial assistance from StudyLink.

At the new minimum wage, anyone with a student loan who works more than 24 hours a week will be above the repayment threshold and have loan repayments deducted from their wages. Students who are eligible for a student allowance are only able to work for 13.9 hours per week before their allowance is reduced.

A student working 25 hours per week at minimum wage and repaying their student loan will receive an extra \$8.80 per week after tax is deducted on the M SL tax code. However, students receiving a student allowance who work 14 hours per week will be no better off following the increase to the minimum wage as they are earning above the income cap, so their student allowance will be cut back dollar for dollar.

The amount paid for student allowances, student loan living cost payments and other forms of

financial assistance have not changed. The Government cited negative inflation over the past year as the reason for this, with Social Development Minister Anne Tolley stating in a press release that "the cost of living has slightly decreased. However benefit rates will be maintained on April 1 this year." In contrast, the rates for Superannuation and the Veteran's Pension have been increased by 2.73% because the Government has set these at two-thirds of the average income rather than using the Consumer Price Index, the measure used for all other benefits and allowances to set payment rates.

The exception to the benefit freeze are parents, including those who receive a student allowance, who will now receive an extra \$25 per week as part of the Child Hardship Package announced in last year's Budget. This increase is automatic for students that have previously provided StudyLink with evidence that they have children. About 3,000 student allowance recipients nationwide will benefit from this increase. ■ TARIQA SATHERLEY

# DON'T GO CHASING WATERFALLS (THEY'RE NOT AS CLEAN OR AS SAFE AS YOU'RE USED TO)



Last week, a lobby group that focuses on pressuring the government to have higher standards for managing the water quality of New Zealand rivers and lakes presented Parliament with a 12,000 signature strong petition recommending changes to national waterway regulation.

Choose Clean Water (CCW) push for better regulations around public bodies of water. Specifically, they want the government to raise the minimum acceptable standard for waterways in this country from “wadeable” – which is the status quo – to “swimmable”. To be considered “wadeable” rivers and lakes only have to pose a “moderate risk of illness” to individuals who are wading or boating through them. Wadeable riv-

ers are, obviously, not safe to swim in or drink from. As of October 2015, 98% of New Zealand's rivers and lakes fell under this category.

Campaigners claim that this represents a serious loss for New Zealanders, with swimming in rivers and lakes being an important part of our shared cultural experience. Choose Clean Water stressed the human cost of the pollution in their handover ceremony. Some members of the group attending the event had walked all the way from Turangi, near Taupo, to Parliament – including some children as young as seven years old. The group also placed thousands of blue paper water drops at the steps of Parliament, arranged in the shape of a river.

The government was taken to task less than a month ago by opposition MPs over the same issues, after a list of initiatives prepared by Environment Minister Nick Smith intended to

help address the problem included a number of policies that had actually already been put in place by the government.

Some new changes are coming, but not quickly – starting from July 2017, dairy farmers and pig farmers will be required to fence their stock from waterways. This policy will gradually expand to dairy grazing farms by 2025, with all beef and deer farms being covered by 2030.

Smith said that he welcomed the public discussion about the topic brought on by the petition, but ultimately felt that the group's standards were unfeasible.

“What I don't think is realistic is to require that every water body in New Zealand be swimmable. That wasn't even true prior to human settlement of New Zealand and I've just got to be really clear that any law or regulation we put in place is actually doable.” ■

## HOUSING GROUSING

More than 2800 state houses in Glen Innes, Panmure and Point England were transferred from state housing to the Tāmaki Redevelopment Company last week, a move which has deeply angered locals.

Tāmaki Housing Group, a protest group that agitates against the transfer of state housing to private ownership in the Tāmaki area, conducted a rolling picket against the transfer in the days coming up to the deal being finalized.

Residents in the three affected areas have complained that the process is essentially state-led gentrification, and that the government is forcing people who have lived in the area their entire lives – sometimes for as long as half a century – from their homes, in order to make way for new developments.

The fact that so many houses in the area are being sold, combined with a shortage of state houses generally, means that those who are displaced by the process are almost always completely unable to return to their community. The development is intended to trade off this problem by producing a certain number of “affordable houses”, as part of their development agreement. However, booming house prices across the city – a problem made worse by the pressure on the suburbs in question by affluent nearby suburbs such as St Heliers and Kohimarama – mean that house prices in the area have doubled over recent years, from \$400,000 in 2011 to \$900,000 today.

This in turn affects rates, which are set by property value: Point England and Glen Innes had average rate increases of 62 per cent and 55 per cent respectively during 2015. As a result, even if some affordable housing is built in the area, the programme still has the potential effect of forcing lower income families out of the area, even if they own their own home.

There are also problems being raised with the

structure of the agreement. The transfer is part of the Government's “Social Housing Reforms” – designed to keep the government's hands out of state housing as much as possible. They do this by allowing private companies and charities to step in and handle the management of state houses, including contracts for redevelopment. The government typically says that this sort of public-private arrangement allows cabinet to better manage housing stock, by both freeing up government resources and by making it easier for the relevant Minister to terminate agreements with providers that aren't operating at a satisfactory standard.

Some fear that the transfers are simply a form of “privatization-by-stealth”, with the houses in question eventually being sold to the com. The scheme as a whole is based on a similar one put in place in the United Kingdom – and that system did end with up with state houses being privatized.

The protests are the latest development in a fight between locals and developers that has been ongoing for over five years. ■

## WHAT'S ON 4TH-10TH APRIL

Start your uni day at the **Outdoor Sunrise Yoga** from 7am-8:15am, April 6, Queens Wharf. Situated behind the Cloud at the water's edge, you can enjoy the view of the harbour from your downward-facing-dog pose. All experience levels welcome, limited mats (so BYO to be sure). First Wednesday of each month & always free!

And to end your day on April 6, head to Cassette Number Nine in Vulcan Lane for some comedy bingo with **Bitchin' Bingo**. Plenty of prizes up for grabs and laughs guaranteed. It's free but you need to book as it will be busy – call Cassette on 09-366-0196.

Catch **Mockasin, Arabia and Finn w/ Fazerdaze** at Crystal Palace in Mt Eden on April 8, 7pm. If it's not already sold out, it probably will soon so get in quick. Tickets are \$50 from [undertheradar.co.nz](http://undertheradar.co.nz) or Flying Out (80 Pitt St).

On 10 April, head out to Greenlane West for the legendary **Cornwall Park District School Fair**, from 10am-2pm. The fair is held at the school and has become one of Auckland's biggest school fairs, with over 60 stalls with crazy bargains, heaps of yummy food, coffee, and a live auction – not to forget those beloved lucky dips. Free entry, with EFTPOS available onsite. ■

## AGONY AUNTIES

Hi Aunties,

*I've been seeing this guy and he's great, but since we've gotten... ahem, cuddly, he's made a couple of comments about the fuzzy state of my nipples. Apparently, they're a "bit of a turn off". I didn't think nip fuzz was a thing (I've never had an issue with it) so I was wondering whether it is actually bad form, or if he just needs to get over it? Personally, I'd rather not add 'nipple plucking' to the long list of body topiary I already have to do.*

From,

**unsure**

Dear **unsure**,

We're so glad that you have brought up this silenced issue! Maybe talk him through your body topiary schedule and see if he would like to compromise on anything? Maybe now's a good time to point out his four day old stubble? Or maybe he's a silky smooth swimmer with high personal standards. Either way it's not okay to inform your partner that aspects of their body are a 'turn off'. It is okay to have preferences of your partner but it's your bod and your preference comes first. Take pride in your natural nipples – or groom 'em. Totally up to you!

*Aunt Phryne and Aunt Wilhelmina xxx ■*

PLEASE SEND YOUR PROBLEM IN 50 WORDS OR LESS TO [LIFESTYLE@CRACCUM.CO.NZ](mailto:lifestyle@craccum.co.nz), ANONYMITY GUARANTEED.



UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND ARCHIVE

## AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY POWDER ROOM SOCIETY'S TOILET REVIEW

### The Old Biology Building Female Toilets

These toilets feel light, airy and secluded. The fact that they're so rarely used enhances these qualities. While investigating these toilets, they were completely empty (apart from me) for the entire half hour, which was very serene and almost surreal in contrast to the herds of lost first years who stumbled around just outside. Although they're secluded, these toilets aren't exactly perfect if you're in need of a place to hide to have a panic attack or have a good tangi, as if someone does happen to decide to visit these toilets (perhaps at the advice of this review) they're bound to hear you. There is one regular sized cubicle which is sufficient but if you're in a 'treat yo'self' kind of mood opt for the spacious left cubicle which features a bag hook and quaint wooden window that you can open and use to look out upon your University kingdom.

These toilets are definite sight-seeing toilets as it's quite uncommon to have classes in this building. While visiting these toilets it is always worth a trip to the Old Biology building to take a look at the cast bronze snails on the handrail of the stairway and the rectangular stylized flora and fauna windows. Lippincott (who designed this building) also designed the Clock Tower and it's interesting to see the comparative restraint in this building, perhaps a reflection of the economic decline which took place after the far more elaborate Clock Tower was built. ■

### BUILDING INFORMATION

OPENED IN: 1939

ARCHITECTS: ROY LIPPINCOTT

TIPS: STAND OUTSIDE THE BIOLOGY BUILDING AND IMAGINE IT IN ITS ORIGINAL PASTEL PINK COLOUR WITH RED TRIMMINGS, BEFORE IT WAS RE-PAINTED WHITE IN THE 90S.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE: NO

BAG HOOKS: YES

X-FACTOR: NO

AESTHETICS: 8/10

PRACTICALITY: 5/10

OVERALL: 7/10

AUPRS ON

FACEBOOK: AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY POWDER ROOM SOCIETY

TUMBLR: [HTTP://AUPRS.TUMBLR.COM](http://auprs.tumblr.com)

INSTAGRAM: @AUPRS



## INNER CITY LUNCH DEALS

**Eightthirty** coffee on K Road does a mean soup of the day, which at only \$8.50, is a great way to see yourself through this transitional weather. This is not your average tinned tomato soup – recently they were offering North African-spiced minestrone soup with chicken, garden veges and pita bread. Proper nice café deal.

Closer to uni, **Revive** on Lorne Street have a great offer for students: delicious vegetarian salads at half price outside the peak hours of 12-2pm. So the next time you emerge from a study daze, realise it's 4.30pm and you haven't had lunch yet, pay these guys a visit. All salads come in biodegradable packaging – yay!

Queen Street institution **Al's Deli's** new place on O'Connell street have a deal to sweeten your morning. Get a breakfast bagel (with bacon!) plus a small coffee for \$10. Nothin' like a tasty batch-cooked Montreal bagel to get your day going.

Already well-established in Wellington, **Kapai** recently opened in Queens Wharf Village (89 Quay St). Offering healthy, preservative-free lunch options, including "Long John" wraps starting at \$9.90, and warming, winter-ready baked potatoes – you can choose your own fillings for just \$7.90. ■

To celebrate the launch of Auckland's first Kapai café, we have 2 vouchers for a week's worth of "Long John" wraps, plus a real-life pair of long johns to give away! Keep your belly full and your lower half warm. Email us at [lifestyle@craccum.co.nz](mailto:lifestyle@craccum.co.nz) with your name to go in the draw. If you're unlucky in long johns – you can still have a taste of Kapai goodness! Just ask about their "Student Smoothie deal" in-store to receive a free Superfood Shot (for extra study brain-power) with any smoothie purchase. (Offer expires 31 July 2016)



## THE CRACCUM GUIDE TO THE METRO GUIDE TO AUCKLAND'S CHEAP EATS: SRI PINANG

The next on *Metro's* list waiting to be plagiarised was Sri Pinang. Sri Pinang immediately caught my eye not because of the cuisine, or the promised "good service" but because it was BYO. This was the perfect opportunity to combine my love of cheap food with my tenuous relationship with cheap wine.

*Metro's* liberal budget aside, the food was worthy of its inclusion on the list. I was flush with public holiday cash at the time and splurged on an entrée of spring rolls. For the main, *Metro* would have you order a curry but I wasn't feeling it so decided on the stir-fry with the most syllables. The stir-fry was decent and by all accounts the curry was uniquely delicious, but the restaurant didn't have any of the charm a K Road BYO should have. I was with four people and only two of us were drinking, which seemed to be for the best as your typical BYO antics would not have been received well. The whole restaurant felt out of place on K Road. It lacked the usual atmosphere you would normally find. Sri Pinang would be nice for a lovely Sunday meal, but that's not what you want from a cheap BYO. At least with the likes of New Flavour you know you can get inappropriately drunk and, at some point after a long wait, you will receive your food and you're unlikely to be kicked out. Sri Pinang did not seem to share New Flavour's endearing, albeit begrudging, acceptance of youth drinking culture.

The food was one of the better BYO meals I've had. The price could nearly be considered reasonable. But you're likely to get some disappointing looks if your wine is finished before your main. ■

**Hours of minimum wage needed for two people to eat here: 4.2**

## FASHION ON CAMPUS



Jerome, Fine Arts

Photograph by Holly Burgess



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★ ★ ★ AND THINGS THAT DON'T.

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## From the Media Officer

I hope you all had a happy Easter and enjoyed the Easter Bunny's visit to the Autumn General Meeting last week. This week in AUSA's Craccum pages I am pleased to introduce to you our Political Engagement Officer (more fondly known as the 'PEO'): Sarah Butterfield. Sarah is AUSA's inaugural PEO and has been doing an excellent job so far - be sure to head over to the newest of AUSA's events - The Flat - at Shadows on 6th April.

## Noticeboard

### EcoFest

Does deep-sea oil drilling grind your gears? Is your life-long dream being arrested for occupying a kauri tree? Are you wanting to rock more sustainable threads, or de-plastify your grocery shop? At ECOFEST, we'll be serving up a sweet lineup of workshops, some stirring seminars, sweet bike rides, mean feeds, and a whole lot of opportunities to get to know your green community. Over ECOFEST you can upgrade your activism toolbox, and hopefully come away with the confidence to save the world in your own unique way! Let out the hippy within, experience a meaningful epiphany about your place in the cosmos, and have a good time from the 4th to the 9th of April after the mid-semester break.

### 'The Flat'

The whole point of the Flat is to start a discussion about issues that affect us as students and will affect our future with politicians and activists and actually brainstorm practical things that we can do to bring some change to the world.

The inaugural flat will be during EcoFest on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April at 6pm onwards in the backroom of shadows the question we will be discussing will be "Is New Zealand doing enough about Climate Change". To make us feel a bit more comfortable the backroom will be decorated like a student flat - shitty couches and questionable rugs inclusive.

So come along raise some hell, change the world etc.

### Student Members for MCT

The Media Complaints Tribunal is an AUSA-led committee that ensures AUSA media, including Craccum, is held accountable for what is published. If students are offended by something that has been printed, then they are able to request that the Tribunal meet to address their complaints. The Tribunal is made up of the AUSA Media Officer, the AUSA President, the Craccum Editors and two students.

**We need to elect these students!**

We will be doing so at Student Forum this week, to be ready for a complaint that has come through. If you are interested in getting some governance experience and contributing towards an important and balanced outcome, then please put your interest forward! For any questions contact Zavara at [mo@ausa.org.nz](mailto:mo@ausa.org.nz)

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# IS NEW ZEALAND DOING ENOUGH ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE?

COME ALONG TO SHADOWS ON THE 6TH APRIL AT 6PM  
TO LISTEN AND DEBATE WITH YOUR FAVOURITE POLITICIANS  
ABOUT NEW ZEALAND AND CLIMATE CHANGE



# AUSA At Queer Quad!

FROM KATE, YOUR QUEER RIGHTS OFFICER

The Condom Fairy bequeathed the chosen in wreaths of LYC latex-y goodness while free baking was given as a bribe to entice students to network with other queer students and members of the arts faculty.

Last Wednesday I had the honour of participating in QueerQuad. The event was hosted by Rainbow Arts, First Year Experience, Tuakana Arts and Arts Equity was a roaring success. It was really cool having such a large group of

queer identifying people coming together to celebrate their sexual and gender identities. We had a really great turn out and a lot of thought provoking issues were discussed. Also, my girlfriend did some really amazing face painting ( follow her IG stylist\_ashworth). My AUSA volunteer squad were awesome! They had great positive energy and really made my stall a success.

One issue I had (that I will probably mention during shag week) is the amount of students turning down free condoms with the excuse of "I don't need them". You may not need them

now, but after one to many Shadz jugs you may be heading to pound town. Don't be a fool! Wrap your tool! This is including sex toys people. Any sort of swapping from bodily fluid can expose you to STIs, so it's really important to use condoms or dental dams during oral. Don't have a dental dam? Macguyver your condom into one! Stay safe homies

That's all from me for now. See you next time for more random articles about stuff!

*Kate Worboys*

*AUSA Queer Rights Officer*



# An Interview With Sarah 'Shandy' Butterfield

On Thursday night a few of us went to Shadz. As we were ordering our drinks I heard the strangest request: 'A shandy please'. The bartender was confused. I was confused. The shandy drinker was not confused - she calmly explained to the bartender exactly how a shandy was made. This week, I'm pleased to introduce to you the AUSA Political Engagement Officer for 2016: Sarah 'Shandy' Butterfield.

## WHAT THE FUCK IS A SHANDY?

It's a lemonade and beer - it's popular in the UK.

## SHOOT. SHAG. MARRY. DAVID CAMERON. THE QUEEN. COLIN FIRTH.

Oh, very British themed... Marry the Queen. Shoot David Cameron. And shag Colin Firth. I want to be the Queen as well.

## YOU WANT TO MARRY YOURSELF?

If you're lesbian, and you marry the Queen, what does that make you? Her consort? Am I Princess Sarah?

## I HEAR YOU LOVE RAP, WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE KENDRICK LAMAR SONG?

Swimming Pools, I like that one. But I also like King Kunta.

## IS SWIMMING POOLS ABOUT (A) A POOL PARTY OR (B) ALCOHOLISM?

I don't know... it's just like a fun song, about swimming... Is it about alcoholism... can we listen to it again?

## WHAT'S THE BEST THING YOU'VE

## EVER CROCHETED?

I crocheted a scarf that I made for my friend that she wore for 3 months in Europe. I like to crochet scarfs for my friends' 21sts, apart from one friend who called me a 'scarf slut' - he said I'm just giving them away without any respect for myself. Are blankets more interesting? I do make blankets.

## POLITICS NOW. ARE YOU NOW OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN A MEMBER OF THE LABOUR PARTY?

Yes... but I made a dramatic exit and caused ripples of distress and anger at my departure

## WHY DO YOU LIKE DONALD TRUMP ON FACEBOOK?

At first it was for entertainment, and then it got scary.

## WHY HAVEN'T YOU UNFOLLOWED HIM?

It's like watching a train wreck

## YOU LIKE WATCHING A TRAIN WRECK?

You know it's wrong. You know something bad's about to happen. But it's got a weird



CHUBS

fascination about it.

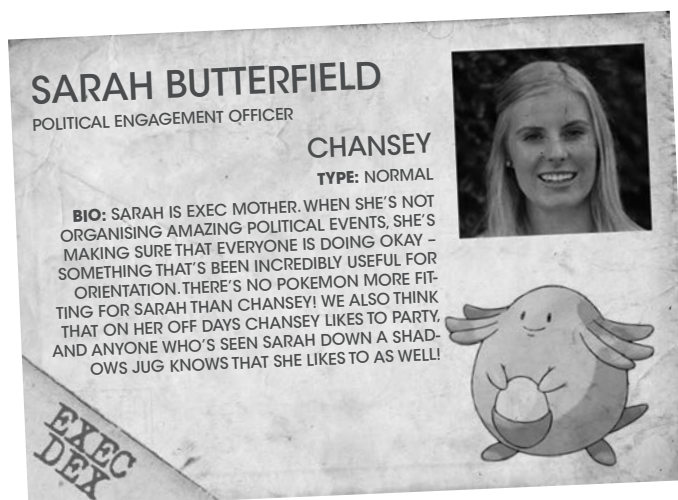
## DO YOU HAVE A COMMENT ON THE POKÉMON THAT WILL HAS ASSIGNED YOU?

I really like pink so I'm ok with it. I don't really care about Pokemon.

## HILLARY OR BERNIE?

I am Hillary Clinton. Actually, I want to be a combination of Taylor Swift and Hillary Clinton. So I can sing and stuff and then debate good policy.

GOT ANY QUESTIONS FOR SARAH OR ANY OF OUR EXEC MEMBERS, SEND THEM THROUGH TO MO@AUSA.ORG.NZ



# Are you that someone?

Test yourself in these situations:

- What would you do if you saw someone at a party, in a bar, at a concert or in a crowd being hassled or touched by someone, and you can see they don't like what's happening.
  - How do you react when your gut is telling you a situation is dodgy?
  - Do you call out your friends if they make rape jokes, cat-call women, slut shame or victim-blame?
  - Would you intervene if you saw or heard something that you knew wasn't right?
- Are you that someone?

When we don't step up we are sending a message that this sort of behaviour is OK.

We can all do and say things to prevent sexual violence: we can step in during an incident, or we can challenge ideas and behaviours that support sexual violence – whether we know the person or not. **We can all be that someone - but will you?**

## Why Bystanders Don't Act

1. They're worried about what others think
2. They fear retaliation
3. They doubt themselves
4. They think someone else will do it

## Four Steps To Bystander Action

Here are our four steps to taking action and being that someone.

### 1 CHECK IN.

*Ask the person if they're OK with what's going on.*

### 2 CALL IT AS YOU SEE IT.

*Tell them what they're doing is not OK.*

### 3 GET INVOLVED.

*If you can do it safely, cause a distraction or split them up*

### 4 GET HELP.

*Grab your mates or others to join you in speaking up.*

If a situation is escalating and it's not safe, **find someone in charge like an RA or bouncer. Call the Police on 111.**

If you or someone you know has been the victim of a sexual assault check out the Toah-Nnest website for a full list of services around the country.  
<http://toah-nnest.org.nz/>

SOUNDS DODGY, LOOKS DODGY?



DON'T HORSE AROUND.  
CALL IT AS YOU SEE IT.

To learn more about healthy sexuality  
check out the website

**[www.familyplanning.org.nz](http://www.familyplanning.org.nz)**

or for more tips on bystander interventions check out  
Are You That Someone?

**<https://www.facebook.com/AreYouThatSome1>**

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# crisis in our backyard

teja appilla wants you to take care of the waitakere ranges before it's too late

Driving towards the city it's the most visible landmark, stretching through the entirety of West Auckland. Yet many have not stepped foot in the Waitakere Ranges. We gaze at the mesmerising vista with not knowledge of the crisis that looms within the forest, affecting our ecosystem.

Our mystical islands were once abundant with behemoths that dominated forests, specifically the Moa and Haast's Eagle. Due to a lack of predation, New Zealand's fauna was diverse and birds evolved to survive through nocturnal behaviour, or simply without wings. However, Māori and other early settlers hunted some species to the point of extinction, and anthropogenic influences have introduced unwanted predators that feast upon native species with no tenacity for survival. This has resulted in widespread chaos within New Zealand's ecosystem as the population of many exotic species drastically declined. Nothing was done about it.

It was almost a century after the initial dis-

turbance to the ecosystem that some form of action was taken to prevent complete annihilation of the fauna. Forest & Bird, a non-governmental organisation, was formed in 1923 with the primary objective of preserving what was left of the environment. The organisation was geared towards achievement in the long-run and based on a wide spectrum. It was an ambitious mission at the time. The objective was divided into several focused projects across the nation: "Places for Penguins" in Wellington, "Bat Recovery Project" in the Marlborough region and "Ark in the Park" in the Waitakere Ranges, in partnership with Auckland Council.

Forest & Bird are also active within political circles to identify unethical schemes which exploit New Zealand's wilderness for capital gain. Of significant importance was the fiasco that Forest & Bird triggered after they accused the then-newly-elected Prime Minister John Key of accelerating a proposal to access 7000 hectares (70km<sup>2</sup>) in the Paparoa National Park for mining, by removing it from the list of "protected lands" under the Crown Minerals Act 1991. This accusation turned out to be true, resulting in a backlash from the public with tens of thousands protesting the proposal. It was abandoned.

Focusing closer to home, the Waitakere Ranges play an instrumental role in Auckland's ecosystem. The dams in this regional park are responsible for up to eighty percent of Auckland's drinking water. Taking this into consideration, the Waitakere Ranges have been subjected to deforestation in certain areas that lie outside the legally "protected" spectrum. However, tracing back to the aforementioned Paparoa National Park, who is to say this 'legally-untouchable' land can remain protected? After all, all that is required are a few signatures. The solution to this is to increase awareness of our local ecosystem, to protect it as a community. Over forty thousand people were required to influence the government against destruction of 70km<sup>2</sup>. How many more would be needed to protect 160km<sup>2</sup> of Auckland's regional park?

Ark in the Park, or simply "Ark", is a project dedicated to approximately 24km<sup>2</sup> (known as the Cascade Kauri Park) of the Waitakere Ranges. It is run by a dedicated team of volunteers, scientists and project managers. The objective is to reduce rodent infestation through passive-baiting, and revive species that have become extinct from the region. Species that have been re-introduced to the park so far have been the North Island Robin, Whitehead

(pōpokotea) and kōkako. According to Gillian Wadams, the Project Manager, bird counts reveal that there are approximately 40% more birds in the Ark-controlled region compared to the neighbouring uncontrolled zone. It is an ongoing process to suppress rodent infestation, and highly unlikely that the pests will be completely eradicated.

*“We gaze at the mesmerising vista that it creates without knowledge of the crisis that looms within the forest, affecting our ecosystem.”*

The ecosystem is also under threat from the ever-increasing population and the additional resources that this demands. The endemic Kauri tree is at risk in Auckland from the deadly ‘Kauri Dieback’ disease. It is a fungus that spreads through the spores in the soil as foreign bacteria from the city are transferred to the forest through our footwear. Almost all trees that are affected by the disease end up dying. It takes hundreds of years for these prehistoric plants to grow to their enormous heights, only to die out within a few years. Although these trees are sparsely protected, the increase in unaware visitors counteracts any positive results.

Herein lies the problem. As the population keeps growing, the threat that the forest faces increases, resulting in the requirement of more volunteers. However, due to the inconsistent ratio of volunteers and populace, the ecosystem is in potential danger. Volunteers at the Ark are given complete responsibility to a specific line (individually or within a group) where the baiting bags need to be replaced every four months. In addition, other activities that volunteers undertake are educating hikers along major tracks, gecko monitoring, wasp control, whitehead translocation and support in exhibitions.

With continual efforts to restore the park,

the ultimate goal of the project is to retain the “wild” feel of the park, despite increasing visitor numbers. Education and awareness are essential goals for the project. With increased support, there is potential to drive the government to protect the Waitakere Ranges with a national park status. To successfully implement this, it would require additional management from the Department of Conservation (overseer of National Parks), working alongside the Auckland Council (the current caretakers of the park). Along with the Hauraki Gulf, the Waitakere Ranges are significant for Auckland’s ecosystem.

It would never dawn upon us that there may still be hope for species that have become extinct. The resurrection of the Takahe, which was known to be extinct for almost 50 years, was a surprise to conservationists when few of these pudgy, blue, flightless birds were discovered in the wilderness of Lake Te Anau during the late 1940s. However, we cannot expect this to happen with every species that goes extinct. From time to time, there have been reports of Moa sightings in Fiordland and Te Urewera National Parks, but this could be too optimistic based on the fact that they are presumed to have vanished over six centuries ago.

*“Our actions affect the sustainability of wildlife and determine the environment we live in... Extinction is preventable, not preordained.”*

On a more positive note, the situation is not completely out of hand. It can still be salvaged. Our actions affect the sustainability of wildlife and determine the environment we live in. We can’t let ignorance control our decisions. It is vital to be proactive to ensure survival of our fauna. Extinction is preventable, not preordained. ■

IF YOU’RE INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING FOR ARK IN THE PARK, VISIT THEIR WEBSITE: [HTTP://WWW.ARKINTHEPARK.ORG.NZ/](http://WWW.ARKINTHEPARK.ORG.NZ/)



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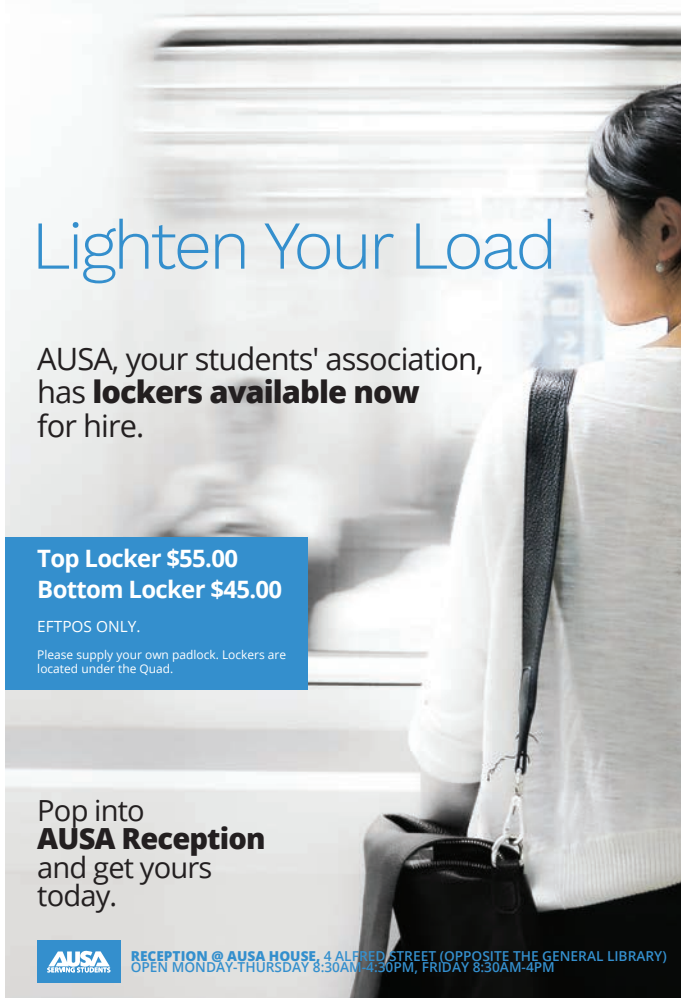
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# let's get physical

*harriet keown* is telling you to get off  
your arse and move that body

You're sitting at your desk after hours of staring at your laptop, waiting for inspiration to hit you. "Study breaks" tend to include scrolling through Facebook, Instagram, doing a few BuzzFeed quizzes, then heading back to Facebook to see what's happened since you last checked in. We've all been there, so we all know what happens next.

You're suddenly struck with the realisation that what you need is a quick dose of energy, so you head to the kitchen and whip up a coffee or a packet of noodles. Well, imma let you finish, but what you actually need right now is a different form of energy and sadly it's not edible. Unsurprisingly, the best way to reboot your brain and supersize your thinking power is by taking the time to get outside and get physical. I'm not here to yell at you like some overly-enthusiastic (actually insane) Cross-Fit trainer about how you should be doing more press-ups and faster tuck-jumps. I want to help you see that doing the thing you think is going to drain you of every last drop of energy will actually leave you feeling ready for anything.

Physical activity pumps extra blood to your brain, bathing it in the oxygen and nutrients it needs to attack any kind of mental task. The more your brain cells are given, the more effective they will be. But wait, like an unwanted,

never-ending infomercial, there is more! Every time you move a muscle in that extraordinary bod of yours, precious hormones are released. These include dopamine, which influences your brain's learning, memory and attention (i.e. win, win and win); serotonin, which has been called the body's "feel-good" chemical; and norepinephrine, which is linked to motivation and perception. All of this will give your brain a kick of natural stimulation, filling you with energy and allowing you to focus better and think more clearly. You're effectively giving yourself a caffeine hit, just without the added sugar, guilt, or inevitable low after the buzz runs out. So next time you're in a seemingly bottomless pit of no motivation or concentration, reach for your running trainers, not your tea strainers.

In the long run (excuse the pun), the benefits of exercise are even more impressive. Researchers at the University of British Columbia did a study to examine the relationship between exercise and the brain. They found that people who did aerobic exercise for one hour a day, three days a week, for six months, experienced an increase in the size of the hippocampus, which is the part of the brain in charge of memory. By doing regular exercise, your brain will literally bulk up. You will improve your ability to recall information said in last week's lectures, discover enhanced talents for memorising important dates or equations and be able to recite the twelve uses of dragon's blood faster than ever. But here's the important part: resistance training and muscle-toning exercises did not have the same results. In other words, you iron-pumping, leg-day-ing, protein-guzzling

gym junkies need to mix up your regime.

I can already hear the protests of "but I don't/won't/can't run". The thing is, humans are inherently born to run. As marathon runner and author Christopher McDougall explained in a TED Talk, when the brain size of humans exploded about two million years ago, we developed the need for much more caloric energy and therefore began to eat carnivorously. However, the first weapons only appeared about 200,000 years ago, leaving early human methods for catching prey shrouded in mystery. With an absence of weapons, claws, fangs, or significant speed or strength, the only thing left in our favour was our endurance. Humans can run long distances better than any other species on the planet, even horses and cheetahs. McDougall's theory is that the only natural advantage the early humans had in the wilderness was to get together as a pack, select an animal as a victim, and literally run it to death. Here we are in modern times, debating over whether it's worth coughing up extra for delivery so we don't have to walk for 10 minutes to the nearest Domino's, not even realising that if our ancestors were hungry, they had to physically chase an antelope until it succumbed to exhaustion.

Now, of course, I'm not saying that we should all be out running an ultra-marathon before breakfast. All I want to do is prove that we are all naturally endowed with the physicality of a runner. We only think we are incapable of stepping one foot in front of the other at a faster pace than usual because of the major

commercialisation of sport over the last century. This has led to the consequential perception that you are only good enough to run if you have the coolest dry-fit clothing, the most high-tech shoes and are winning all the biggest races. We look at running as a punishment we have to do because we ate too much pizza the night before, not as a chance to fulfil our basic natural potential.

So far, you might think that I'm all fact and no act, but to prove this wrong I have generously compiled a list of the best ways to get active around campus. Yes, all involve cardio. No, not all involve running. But they are all a great option for your daily hit of natural hormone release, and are fun, doable and mostly free. Not having to think of these ideas yourself should probably save you enough energy to be able to do them. You're welcome.

**1) Walk to uni.** There's that myth that walking burns more calories than running. Spoiler alert: definitely just a myth, but there's no fallacy in saying that walking burns more calories than taking the bus. Obviously this idea is a little out of the picture for a lot of people, but this does not include anyone who lives less than an hour's walk from campus. Just make sure you take an umbrella.

**2) Rec Centre group fitness classes.** Anyone who signed up for AUSA this year (so everyone, right?) will have received a free entry pass, so no excuses for not giving it a go. Group fitness classes probably sound to some like the equivalent of going to Bar 101 during O Week: a sticky, sweaty mess with too much adrenaline and not enough hot guys. But anyone who's ever been to one of Chris's Zumba classes will know that at least a third of this assumption is false (to find out which third, head to the Rec Centre sports hall at 5:20pm on a Friday).

**3) Nike Training Club classes.** Exactly like a group fitness class at the Rec Centre, but ALWAYS FREE. Just make sure you register early, because spots get booked out quicker than you can do a burpee. NTC classes are usually taken by Nike Master Trainer/Instagram Fitspo/Liter-al Goddess, Kirsty Godso, so you'll leave having gained not just gains, but a whole new level of #goals. The workouts are mostly directed towards women, but anyone is welcome to go along and drop it like a squat.

**4) Change your degree.** The best way to get fit on campus is simply by getting into second year law; there is no shortcut to Short St. Alternatively, get into second year med so you'll be forced to get between Grafton and City campus a hundred times a day. I've heard neither option is very difficult.

**5) University of Auckland running club.** The first time I attended a uni club run, I was so nervous that I didn't actually rule out the possibility of dying until I woke up the next morning. But don't let my lack of confidence put you off – maintaining life throughout the run is actually perfectly achievable. People of all fitness levels are encouraged; as long as you have a rough idea of the intended route, it doesn't matter how slow (or fast) you go. Runs are usually between 6-8km and leave the Rec Centre at 5:30pm every Thursday.

**6) Prancercise.** The perfect activity for getting your heart-rate up in Albert Park in between lectures. Youtube it, you won't regret it.

**7) Hit the stairs.** I know everyone is sick of hearing the infuriatingly optimistic advice of "Skip the lift!! Take the stairs instead!!!", but it's just so effective. Next time you need a book from the top level of the general library, avoid that awkward 25 seconds in too-close-for-comfort proximity with a stranger and get your legs

moving. By the time you get to the book you need, you'll have the dopest dopamine levels on campus.

**8) Nike Running Club.** To quote a friend of mine as we were waiting to depart on his first NRC run, "I feel like I'm getting fit just standing amongst these people". This is a pretty accurate summation of the Nike atmosphere; it feels more like you're heading out to save the world than simply to go for a run. Led by superstar Nike athlete Lydia O'Donnell along with her staunch posse of pacers, and leaving their Britomart store every Wednesday at 6pm, it's a great way to reach new fitness goals, make new friends and get 15% off your next pair of shoes. Not technically on campus, but I couldn't not include it because I am a self-proclaimed Nike whore.

Obviously there are heaps more possibilities for getting your blood pumping and sweat glands working on campus, these ideas are simply to get you on the bandwagon. Once you reach peak active mode, you'll start seeing opportunities for exercise everywhere. You'll be doing wall sits between lectures and hill sprints up Grafton Road in no time. The most important thing to remember is that you shouldn't exercise to look good; you should exercise to feel good. You're so much more likely to feel results if you go into it with the goal to clear your mind and gain more energy than if your ambition is to get rid of that infamous fresher five. All it takes is 30 minutes of cardio every few days and you'll be smashing those assignments and acing those exams like never before. Scientifically proven fact, money-back guarantee. ■

-Harriet Keown



**WE'RE TALKING LEADERSHIP, EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT. BUT IT'S NOT ALL LISTENING.**

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# stumped by trump?

*daniel meech* tackles the truth on why you are the ones to blame for the political rise of the pouty, orange-faced, big-talking billionaire

Donald Trump is hardly the people's champion, at least as far as us students are concerned. Mention his name to anybody on campus and you're likely to induce a sort of reflexive, bile-spitting action, only out-matched in violence by the one induced by the sight of his hair cut. And yet, what most of us don't realise is that it's exactly us – the Trump-hating, politically apathetic student body – who are keeping his campaign alive.

As various political commentators have been keen to point out, Trump's surprising polling numbers aren't due to the invisible, idiotic nation of high school drop-outs we tend to pin it on, but rather the enormous amount of media attention he receives. He really does receive a phenomenal amount of coverage: almost 23 times as much as fellow competitor/disgruntled history teacher Bernie Sanders. As John Sides, an American media analyst, has helpfully explained, it means that the Trump campaign survives via an equation we all intrinsically understand: allow the media to be dominated by a single persona and eventually all the others will fade away. Trump saturates the American landscape like nothing else, and, as a result, he has an easier time than other candidates when it comes to finding an audience who'll connect with him.

*Hang on, you say, what has this got to do with me? Surely American media biases aren't my fault? If Fox wants to treat 1984 like a training manual, there's not a lot I can do about it; and if the media loves Trump, then there's no one to blame but them. Right?*

Wrong. To argue that point would be to forget the golden rule of America: everything runs on capitalism.

It's no accident that the media chooses to cover Trump. Networks like Fox, while appearing to exist in some alternate dystopian reality, are still rooted to this earth by the basic need to make money. CNN, Fox and MSNBC may have their differences in political views, but when it comes to the running of their networks, they all have one thing in common: they need us to survive.

After all, without viewers there's no audience and without a marketable audience, there's no opportunity for ad revenue. As a result, news networks go where we want them to go, see what we want them to see, and ultimately, show what we want them to show. And, overwhelmingly, we've told them that we want to see Trump.

Because, whether vehemently against Trump or just mildly opposed to him, almost everybody is willing to watch him speak. In today's world of extreme internet hyperbole, Trump's comments are so ridiculous, so spurious, so unbelievably inflammatory that it's practically impossible not to tune in, even if only to laugh at the stupidity of the situation.

Trump may be an idiot, but he's an internationally recognised one. Take a stroll across the Arctic Circle and you'll still run into a local tweeting comparisons to Hitler. (On that note, I'd love to know: is it because of the far-right politics that they both felt the need for vaguely nauseating hair pieces, or does a shit sense of hairstyle just naturally segue into ultra-xenophobic fascism? Something to think about next time you're at the barbers).

We tune in to Donald Trump for the same reason we won't tune in to the six o'clock news: it's easy to laugh at idiots, but a hell of a lot harder to get pumped about international foreign aid policies.

Labour unions, budget predictions, international trade agreements – you may as well be putting your balls in a vice when it comes to real politics. Trump, on the other hand, is dumb, distant, and easy to make fun of. And if the internet has taught us anything, it's that the fuzzy feeling of righteous indignation beats cold hard facts any day of the week.

CNN doesn't cover Trump because they want to – they do it because they *need* to. They do it because he's the only politician guaranteed to get our attention. Whether we identify as leftists or right-wingers, liberals or new world jihadists, Trump appeals to us all in a way that no one else does. He's the only politician talking the language of the modern world, where snappy click-bait headlines are everything – after all, regardless of political taste, no one passes over a link entitled "Donald Trump Bans Muslims".

But maybe that shouldn't be so. It seems clear that any system producing Trump as a prime candidate for office must be seriously and fundamentally broken, and it also seems equally obvious that we're the ones to blame for it.

Maybe it's time we started shaping up, got our asses into gear, and learned to pay attention to the things that matter. It's time to expand our knowledge of the world by looking further than just the handful of articles that find their way onto our Facebook feed. It's time we learned that Harold the Giraffe really was right: the mind is a muscle, and without its use – without forcing ourselves to absorb information critical to making informed decisions – it really will wither away and die. It's a long shot, but one worth taking.

And if we make it, if we really do change our ways, then who knows? Despite all his best efforts, Donald Trump may just end up making America great again. ■



## Buttman v Pooperman

ARTS EDITORIAL BY SAMANTHA GIANOTTI

*Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* has killed it at the Box Office in its opening week. It has also killed the hopes and dreams of those who just wanted a fucking decent movie to watch on a Saturday night.

While a massive budget does not a good film make, this film had a hefty US\$250,000,000 to play around with, a small fortune left in the hands of a director whose vision seemed to extend no further than a series of inane plot contrivances used to make two characters want to beat the shit out of each other, and ultimately team-up, with some grit and grimaces stirred in for good measure. In lieu of a full rundown of the film's fuckery, I will simply have Dr Ian Malcolm sum up the general consensus:



*Batman v Superman* has been well and truly torn a new one by critics and audiences alike. But a large chorus of voices remain steadfast in their belief that *Buttman v Pooperman* is totally rad, yo. Some have even gone so far as to say that this film is the best superhero film of 2016 (it's only April, dude, keep your trousers on) and that it left them "speechless". In a good way. Not in the way that it left me speechless, to the point that the only way I could communicate my outrage at the gall of Zack Snyder for even *daring* to make my eyes see this clusterfuck of a movie was to punch my friend

in the arm repeatedly. Sorry, Mark.

I understand blindly loving something. This is coming from the girl who once watched *The Princess Diaries 2* fourteen times in one week. (I hope that by saying "girl" you will assume that I was like eleven years old and not know that this happened less than four years ago.) But the real sticks in the mud are those who suggest that to even criticise a superhero movie is a practice in pedantics or pointlessness. Don't look for deeper meaning, they say; it's a superhero film, they tell us. It's meant to be just action and 'splosions and lycra-ed lads doing pseudo-karate. Well to that I say: \*fart noise\*.

There is a scene in *Legally Blonde 2: Red, White & Blonde* where Reese Witherspoon tries to convince Congress that they must act on the issue of animal rights by comparing their complacency with the time she got a bad haircut. Bear with me. Reese realises that it wasn't the salon's fault that they used Brassy Brigitte to dye her hair instead of Harlow Honey. She could have spoken up. So she implores the lawmakers to do the same. "Speak up, America," she squeaks. "Speak up!"

And that is what we must do.

We must learn from Reese Witherspoon, my friends.

There seems to be a sort of hierarchy between different genres of film; most movies are open to criticism, and are expected to subscribe to (at the very least) the most basic elements of film-making. Yet we see that superhero films, and the action genre more broadly, are mindlessly adored by some, and deemed unworthy of real criticism by others. Action films are largely absent when it comes to the major categories of award ceremonies that honour film-making. But to believe that superhero films should be exempt from appraisal is insulting to both fans and filmmakers (just as insulting as having a damsel in distress in a 2016 blockbuster film, amiright *B v S* viewers?).

At the very least, a superhero film should tick the boxes when it comes to the basic premises of what actually makes a film decent. A plot that makes sense, editing that doesn't have a timeline flitting between day and night faster than you can say "Martha", some semblance of character development and a score that doesn't make my intestines curl up within my body as I'm fetal in my cinema seat, willing Snyder's self-congratulatory shitfest to be over.

I digress.

Even if we overlook some *astounding* technical shortcomings, at the very least it seems a filmmaker should be held accountable for how much or how little they respect the source material from which their film derives. This is certainly for the already-converted fans, who know that Batman never kills his adversaries, or know that Clark Kent is meant to be more of a goofball than a surly grump who loiters on his girlfriend's balcony, cape billowing dramatically in the wind. But, possibly even more so, this should be for the new fans, the young kids who are experience these characters and their stories for the first time. While these are fully-fledged figures, their legacy massive in both length and volume, this is not the knowledge every individual will bring to a theatre, and their experience should be just as valued as the already built-in fanbase. Imagine the children for whom *Star Wars: Episode I – The Phantom Menace* was their first Jedi interaction. Were they put off *Star Wars* forever? Do they think that *that* is what a *Star Wars* film is supposed to be? No one wants that kind of blood on their hands.

We are entitled to expect more from superhero films. It is only by criticising the bad and lauding the good that we can push filmmakers to do better, and superhero films to be better. Don't accept shitty explosions and poorly filmed car chases in place of a well-thought out storyline, or characters with solid grounding and motivations. Think of the children. ■



# the desired and the desirer

BY DANA TETENBURG

Celebrity culture has always revolved around an artist-audience binary. Fans desire, and the celebrity is desired. They live in polar opposite worlds, and there is little chance for connection, but they continue playing these roles.

However, the 21<sup>st</sup> century and its technologies allow content creators to connect with their audiences through a variety of social media platforms, in an attempt to soften and disperse the underlying separation between each group. Social media itself is created and advertised as the ultimate solution to stay connected to people when you're apart, but audiences and artists don't entirely use it the way your distant relatives do. Fans tweet, comment and "like" their hearts out in the attempt to stand out and be recognized by their favourite celebrities. Occasionally, it's to the point that it's practically spamming, which is how fan girls get their reputation for having borderline psychosis. New media technology allows the music industry to move much faster than it used to, and social media acts as a nice easy-access platform for fans to let themselves go and push the limits of communication.

However, since so many people have access to the internet, the amount of content to reply to is overwhelming. The chances of being interacted with are hugely slim; a significant amount of social media labour is required to garner even the slightest bit of attention. Artists themselves do what they can, but their

social media usage and content is generally controlled and regulated by their management to protect their image. Social media for them acts primarily as a promotion method. The internet is where everyone is, so the internet is the place to target and inform. Celebrities and their manager's accounts are used like a public resume. Other media companies have attempted to step in and help push fans closer to their faves, using fan questions in interviews, and allocating dates and times and hashtags for live Q&As. They make promises that the artist will be completely and utterly present so the fans can be ready to bombard them with questions and praise. But it seems to be just a case of companies receiving free labour rather than doing the fans a genuine favour.

But it's hard to be sure the fans even care. It's become less about being in it for the genuine interaction, and rather having proof of your interaction. Social media Q&As require fans to come up with questions that are either the most creative or the most related to promotion in order to receive attention. Even real life interactions become less about giving questions and comments, and more about shoving your iPhone in the artist's face. Proof of interaction is ridiculously difficult to get, but when successful, fans can receive the ultimate social emblem of their fanhood.

This is where it becomes all about fan hierarchies. Artists hold a god-like status, and interaction with them means you've waded into their holy water lifestyle. It may be one in a million to a celebrity, but to a fan a selfie or a mediocre Twitter reply acts as your own divine

visual keepsake. In reality, fans aren't properly close to their idols, but it makes them feel like they are, which is good enough for them. Yet if you're a part of the majority of fans that have not been able to receive anything, you're left at the bottom of the fan hierarchy, gawking over what others have managed to grasp.

The struggle for interaction is real, and it gets to a point where it's just all about wasting time on the internet (sound familiar?). Social media doesn't really create a closer relationship between audiences and artists – it just allows for the possibility to exist. That's a bit of a vague concept, but it makes sense that some fans refuse to give up. There's an overwhelming amount of people competing for interaction, but the final social emblem reward is a big deal in this day and age. Nobody cares if you were in and out of the artist's inner circle in the space of two seconds. The fact is that you were there and you can show something for it. And when your favourite artist becomes part of your whole source of happiness, showing off some sort of relationship is an empowering keepsake to have.

The roots of the fan lifestyle and the artist lifestyle are grounded, and it is unrealistic to say that fans and artists can become genuinely closer through a glimmer of interaction, if true interaction is even achieved in the first place. The foundations of the desired and the desirer are difficult to break through. Fans are surely entitled to enjoy the fruits of their favourite's social media – but they should not lose sight of how the scales are weighted. ■



## Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice

FILM REVIEW BY ALEXANDER ANSEM

"What if Superman coming to earth was like 9/11, but worse?" – the apparent inspiration for Zack Snyder's latest installment of 'the sick man of comic book cinema' *Superman* franchise.

We start with flashbacks to Superman's apocalyptic battle with Zod, combined with a "too long didn't read" rundown of Batman's history/survivor guilt complex. Many people, including Batman himself, have come to the conclusion that Superman is a threat to humanity and needs to be controlled or put down. Lex Luthor is also involved for reasons which extend little beyond "because he's Lex Luthor" and "he has Kryptonite". The injection of Wonder Woman only further muddies the water, as her five or six lines of dialogue fail to explain her stake in anything and leaves you asking why she is in the film at all.

In a tale that should be largely character-driven, the ideology, motivations and charisma of each involved party is sorely lacking. The film slowly descends into a bewildering mess of dream-sequences, expository dialogue, slow motion cinematography, blatant religious metaphors, (literal) flash forwards and in-film teasers of DC's cinematic lineup for the next five years.

For someone with only a cursory knowledge of DC comics, most of this felt frustratingly without context and only served to extend the film's insufferably long run time. The addition of Jeremy Irons as Alfred and the film's titular fight granted some respite, however the penultimate showdown is over disappointingly fast and feels like a poor payoff for the nearly hundred minutes of superfluous build up.

To cut a very long, confusing story short – the film is hampered by unlikable and vaguely motivated characters all set against a backdrop of thematically childish, tonally-deaf, blue filter comic book pastiche that is steadily becoming Snyder's unmistakable trademark.



## Zootopia

FILM REVIEW BY JACK CALDWELL

*Zootopia* is Disney's latest animated release, and tells the story of Judy Hopps, a bunny descended from carrot farmers in rural Bunnyburrow, who fulfils her dream of becoming a police officer. Prejudged by the department for her small size, Judy ends up a parking warden in Zootopia, a metropolis in which predators and prey live in harmony. She blackmails a criminal hustler fox named Nick Wilde to give her inside knowledge on the city's big case, which enables her to convince the police department that she can become a great officer.

Sounds like a buddy cop movie right? Wrong. Indeed, the film title intends to entice children and deliberately surprise adults at the realisation that *Zootopia* really has nothing to do with animals or zoos. The true purpose of *Zootopia* is its central message; an embrace of multiculturalism and diversity in the face of fear and xenophobia.

While this message could certainly resonate globally, with the refugee crisis and Islamophobia in Europe, the film is clearly 'set' in the United States. The contrast between street-smart, northern city 'predator' Nick and well-intentioned but culturally oblivious farm girl 'prey' Judy, is a fascinating post-Civil War throwback. *Zootopia* insists that our proverbial Southerner Judy is a victim of innocent ignorance rather than a perpetrator of bigotry, and that she can love the 'other' and still be a great police officer. So yes, sprinkles of the police brutality debate in here as well.

Other than this extraordinary social commentary, and a nicely unravelled crime story, we don't have much else to say here. A lack of the laughter and tears for which *Inside Out* set the bar very high is where *Zootopia* falls short, meaning that its legacy will not be as an animated classic, but certainly a good pick for film studies classes.



## River of Fundament

FILM REVIEW BY THEO MACDONALD

Matthew Barney's latest screened in Wellington as part of the Arts Festival. The film was seven years in the making, although per Barney's practice, every part of that process, each prop, each sketch, each performance, can be considered a self-sufficient work. The final movie is six hours long, split over three acts, with time for canapés, cigarettes, and mouthfuls of whiskey in-between.

*River of Fundament* sits on that classic crossroad: is it artwork, documentation of artwork, opera, or commercial cinema? The answer is all, but it is the latter categorisation that endears the most. In brief, the film is an adaptation of Norman Mailer's Egyptian fantasy *Ancient Evenings*, into which Barney transposes Mailer himself, then transposes that transposition into post-financial-crisis Detroit, and then (I think) transposes this transposed Detroit into Mailer's New York apartment during his celebrity-ridden wake. It's undeniably an art film (think Chantal Akerman or Chris Marker), but *River of Fundament* also shares a heritage with the surreal European epics of the mid-20th century, particularly *The Exterminating Angel*. It's an exciting continuation of that heritage because, like those movies, Barney supprises by being generous with his audience. It's funny when it wants to be, referencing police procedurals and Mel Brooks comedies, and the divine family melodrama at the center engages through Sondheimian soliloquy. It gets scatological (quickly, tangibly), but the scat *seems* necessary.

It might be pointless reviewing a movie unlikely to show in New Zealand again (Barney dislikes home distribution) but if you encounter a screening, don't miss the chance. I'll admit I fell asleep in the last ten minutes (whiskey makes me drowsy), but if I had the chance to see *River of Fundament* again, I would.



## You and I

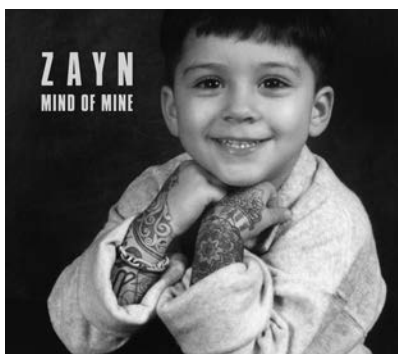
Jeff Buckley

ALBUM REVIEW BY CHRISTY BURROWS

Before *Grace*, Jeff Buckley's debut album of 1994, there were a number of drifting years in which Buckley largely made his living from café residencies in the New York scene. On a daily basis, he mimicked the varied styles of his favorite musicians in an endless catalogue of covers before being picked up by Columbia Records. The songs recorded for *You and I* in 1993 came from this part of his life, intended as a starting point in the studio rather than an end product for release.

One of the standout tracks is "Calling You", a vulnerable cover of Jevetta Steele's 80s original in which Buckley hurls himself into the choruses with little heed for his proximity to the microphone. The unrest of this performance is immediately hushed by the lullaby centerpiece of the album: "Dream of You and I". Buckley explains his inspiration in the recording, a dream he had about "a really cool space jam... the person in this song is singing to his lover... That he's completely theirs. The lover has forbidden anybody to have contact with him, the lover has taken away his freedom, taken away his days and nights, taken away his dreams..." After this melancholy creation, Buckley's erratic wailing in Zeppelin's "Night Flight" is ludicrous. Apparently he thought so too; when his voice breaks during an attempt at a high pitched shriek, he ends the song abruptly by saying "ahh shit... I hate that".

*You and I* would have likely been left unreleased if Buckley hadn't gone and drowned himself in a river too soon. But he did. So here we are. To quote J.K. Rowling, it's "better than a whack on the nose with a rusty old poker."



## Mind of Mine

ZAYN

ALBUM REVIEW BY CATRIONA BRITTON

Zayn Malik, the first member of One Direction to go solo, is all grown up and his own man and guess what, kids? He likes sex.

His RnB slick vocal riffs and muted slow-jam beats are everything his grown-up fanbase will adore. Please tell us all the dirty, sexual things you've thought about, Zayn! Gone are the teen-pop, barely suggestive lyrics he used to have to sing that, as he has made clear, did not mean anything to him. His songwriting could do with some tweaking however. He attempts to appeal to our desire with awkward lyrics that compare fucking to being both a paradise and a warzone, as seen in lead single, "PILLOW-TALK". Not the most comfortable juxtaposition on such an intimate subject.

Don't get me wrong though. He does seduce us with that breathy voice of his, and the slick RnB production comes across as a hybrid of The Weeknd and Miguel. It's understated and surprisingly sexy. Must listens include "BeFoUr", "rEaR vLeW" and "LIKE I WOULD".

But there we see another thing that seemingly contradicts his full-blown sexual reinvention: his song titles must have been typed by a child. Because why, Zayn? Why would you write them like this? This was cool when everyone was twelve. We know your album cover is the cutest album cover of all time, but seriously. You don't need to follow through.

Arguably the best moment on this album is "INTERMISSION: fLoWer", which showcases Zayn singing in Urdu so beautifully. It is the most expressive and poetic moment of the album and highlights just why it's important to have a Muslim artist with so much influence expressing himself and his culture in a Western-dominated industry.



## Balls

THEATRE REVIEW BY SHMULY LEOPOLD

I was asked to review a play called *Balls*. More specifically, I requested free tickets so that I could review a play called *Balls*. I happen to have balls myself. Finally, art I could relate to. I knew this would be epic, and profoundly meaningful. Unlike the the awful deflated grapes nestled between my very much inflated thighs.

I assumed this play was at The Basement. The Arts Editor, famed lesbian and kleptomaniac, informed me at the last possible moment (the day before the play) that it was in New Lynn. New Lynn is not inside The Basement. New Lynn is in West Auckland. New Lynn is awful. Nothing good has ever come from New Lynn. A wretched, stinking hell-hole. This being said, I'm an intrepid reviewer and man of culture. So I donned my favourite reviewing outfit: green waistcoat, fedora, metre-long beard, spectacles, and a strap-on dildo. I permed my hair. I varnished my strap-on. I vacuumed. I farted. I was ready to go.

I sat on my bed. I stroked my reviewing strap-on. I had a quick nap. I slept till 1am. I woke refreshed. I missed the fucking play.

Here is what I assume the play was:

A man walks on stage. Dressed all in black. His hair is very short on the sides, and very floppy on top. The man is slightly fat. The man looks into the audience. He finds his victim, probably a reviewer, probably the most sophisticated looking reviewer, probably a reviewer wearing his best reviewing strap-on. The man tenderly pulls out his testicles. The man fondles his testicles for two hours while shouting things like "gender", "construct", and "art". The play ends.

After this experience I will never review a play in New Lynn again. It was fucking terrible.

## Endless Worlds Most Beautiful; or The Author's Immortality Machine

ARTS COMMENT BY MICHAEL CLARK

I love maps of fictitious universes. That's why I was so troubled that with the announcement of *Star Wars* VII-IX came the retconning of the *Star Wars* universe that wasn't encapsulated in film.

The novels, comics and games now didn't happen. What you had played, what you had read, was now meaningless in the context of the greater picture. All those planets, people, and events were rendered inessential, as if they weren't really there in the first place. This map that everyone had created overtime had been redrawn. A map written over – warped and disfigured. A map that is not absolute and therefore meaningless. I loved *The Force Awakens* but it struck up an interesting dilemma I've had with worldbuilding, namely – who decides a world?

One of the greatest imagined worlds is Tolkien's legendarium, filled to the brim with religious mythos, creature lore and ancient languages. His barebones sketches of Middle Earth have evolved over time, so that there is now a complete map of Middle Earth marked with locations and points of interest. The reason I love maps is because they are absolute and autonomous. They bring order to ambiguity and fill in the gaps that the story left out. It is as if these places exist despite you reading of it. It is as if the story comes second to the maps themselves.

I am quite fond of this idea. That fictitious maps create consistency and autonomy. That built worlds are an art within themselves and any stories that originate in this world must serve the greater world. That the world has already been created and the reader just needs to explore it.

But this can be a problematic view.

Maps bind a story so tightly that there is no room for re-imaginings of the text. It makes the reader lazy, passive and pulls their responsibility away from creating the world themselves. Critical theory always advocates the reader's involvement in building worlds. They create the text as much as the writer does by interpreting words into something that they are familiar

with. "Writing is always a game," says Evan Puschak, "it's a transaction that emerges from a writer's implications and a reader's interpretive toolbox. Worldbuilding seems to deny this transaction – replace it with a cleaner one in which the story on offer is like a clock and the writer is like a clockmaker."

Worldbuilding is a rhetoric that authors use to keep a text their own. *Star Wars I-III* writes the static backstory of Darth Vader but think how great it would be if the famed villain's backstory could be written and rewritten timelessly in new and inventive ways. "Worldbuilding is dull," writes novelist and essayist M. John Harrison, "[it] numbs the reader's ability to fulfil their part of the bargain, because it believes that it has to do everything around here if anything is going to get done." These maps that I like bring order to a shapeless fictional universe, but in doing so bring static, unchanging worlds, void of the reader's own interpretation.

That is why I was anxious about the erasure of the *Star Wars* universe. It was a collective universe authored by hundreds of people only to be overridden by a claimed authority who wanted more money. I still love worldbuilding, but not at the cost of the reader's own dynamic imagination. ■

## broadcast 95 FM

It's your friendly neighbourhood radio station, back with your weekly dose of radio goodness. This week we'd like to introduce you to our morning brunch segment: Morning Glory with Esther McIntyre.

Esther's been bobbing around the 95bFM offices since 2010, starting off as a news teamer. Esther's played the part of Wire host, 1-4 host and Breakfast Producer in her time at b, before landing the gig as the host extraordinaire of Morning Glory.

Catch Esther and Morning Glory on air every weekday morning from 9 till midday for pure magazine radio at it's finest. It's your daily dowsing in arts, culture, interviews and features. Plus a generous serving of great music. There's food, fashion and artists from home and

abroad. Give it a crack.

If you're interested in joining the b team, come say hello and check out the scene. We're on the top floor of the AUSA building, opposite the cultural space and *Craccum* office.



## The 95bFM Top 10

- 1 **AVERAGE RAP BAND**  
Fly Casual (NZ)
- 2 **MO KOLOURS FT JONWAYNE**  
Tears, Sand & Thorns
- 3 **ILLS WINTER**  
Not Ours To See (NZ)
- 4 **THE BETHS**  
Whatever (NZ)
- 5 **DAVID BOWIE**  
I Can't Give Everything Away
- 6 **BRAIN JONESTOWN MASSACRE**  
La Facon Don't La Machine l'Arriere (NZ)
- 7 **YUKON ERA**  
Daily Judgement (NZ)
- 8 **THE LAST SHADOW PUPPETS**  
Aviation
- 9 **THREAT. MEET. PROTOCOL.**  
The Garden (NZ)
- 10 **ANNA MEREDITH**  
R-Type

LISTEN TO THE TOP TEN ON WEDNESDAYS 7-9PM ON 95BFM 95BFM.COM/TOP10

# The Switch

(Not the terrible movie with Jennifer Aniston and Jason Bateman)

ARTS SPOTLIGHT BY MARK FULLERTON & SAM LYNCH

Shit happens. Actors throw fits, or are busy, or die. But there's no reason why someone else can't slot into the role that someone else has already made their own, right? *Craccum* takes a look at some classic cases of the ol' switcheroo.

Marty McFly Sr.

CRISPIN GLOVER/JEFFREY WEISSMAN

Word is Crispo wasn't too happy that his pay was reduced by half for the second instalment of *Back to the Future* (despite his character barely featuring) and decided that he wouldn't return. Rather than beg for forgiveness and give him a pay rise, Robert Zemeckis simply hired another actor who sorta kinda maybe looked like Glover, added a few prosthetics, and went on as if none of it had ever happened. Smooth.

Rachel Dawes

KATIE HOLMES/MAGGIE GYLLENHAAL

Holmes' commitment to bank heist comedy



*Mad Money* meant that she was unavailable to appear in the 2008 *Batman Begins* sequel *The Dark Knight*. Given that the character of Rachel was so poorly developed in *Batman Begins*, her replacement by Maggie Gyllenhaal in *The Dark Knight* raised a few eyebrows but caused no real controversy. Foolish move, Katie. While *The Dark Knight* went on to critical acclaim and is commonly found near (or at) the top of lists of the greatest superhero films, *Mad Money* went on to top a whole range of 'Worst Films of 2008' lists.

Dumbledore

RICHARD HARRIS/MICHAEL GAMBON

The thespian world mourned the loss of Richard Harris in 2002, as did Warner Bros. The studio was now without a Dumbledore, a key role in what was set to become a hugely profitable franchise. Old Dumbledore may have been much warmer, nicer and generally less

shouty but he wouldn't have been able to take on a house elf, let alone Voldemort. In losing Richard Harris, the franchise gained Michael Gambon, an equally British but slightly less frail old man. New Dumbledore retained a mysterious charm while simultaneously letting you know he had no time for your bullshit. *Order of the Phoenix* had one of the best displays of wizarding in any of the movies and Harris lacked any of the intensity or presence that such a scene required.

Everybody in *Atlas Shrugged*

LITERALLY EVERYBODY

Taylor Schilling (*Orange is the New Black*) and Grant Bowler (*Outrageous Fortune*) kicked things off as Dagny Taggart and Hank Reardon in *Part I* but the production was such a disaster, both critically and financially, that much of the cast and crew refused to return for *Part II*. Rather than abandon the project, however, the studio thought it would be a good idea to replace the entire cast and production team and go ahead with it anyway. *Part II* was equally unsuccessful, and the cast and crew bailed again. So they were replaced. Again. The *Rotten Tomato* ratings tell a damning tale: *Part I* received a paltry 11% approval rating, *Part II* an embarrassing 5% and *Part III* received 0%, placing it alongside such dubious classics of cinema as *Joe Dirt 2* and *Midgets vs. Mascots*. ■

# Denyce Su'a – Mastering Her Craft

ARTS SPOTLIGHT

As a review from Theatreview so succinctly put it, "It's refreshing to see upcoming home-grown female talent take the stage and own it!" – and that is exactly what Denyce Su'a is doing. Having dedicated her time at university to the pursuit of performance and a career in theatre, Denyce is set to star in Massive Theatre Company's latest show, *The Wholehearted*. I had a chat with Denyce last week (interrupting some of her very precious downtime, and getting in the way of her doing her laundry. Sorry, Denyce.)

**Her Master's project:** Denyce produced, directed and ultimately starred in her Master's project, *Talosaga*. Way to make us all feel inferior, Denyce. She focused on playwriting and production through this project, telling the personal story of her family and her father in

a very public way. With only a few months to nut out an entire play, Denyce was immersed in the production process, writing a piece to not only be graded, but judged by an audience on opening night. This sounds rather stressful and I am impressed.

**"Oh, you're doing an Arts degree?":** I asked Denyce what it had been like to face this age-old (judgmental) question after she pursued drama to such a high level during her time at the University of Auckland. Denyce told me that while her family had always been supportive of her passions and her pursuits, she did have that little dredge of fear that all Arts students experience when someone asks just what it is they're studying. Denyce pointed out something very wise – all Arts students are doing an Arts degree because they are pursuing what they love. (Although I'm sure some commerce students love accounting and finance and stuff. I believe it, but I sure as hell don't understand it.)

***The Wholehearted:*** *The Wholehearted* is a "devised piece of theatre" where "everything in the show comes from the actors". Using

the actors' personal stories, and those from strangers in the community who were interviewed, this show aims to look at and encourage discussion of "love, wholeheartedness, life". Sounds like a feel-good time. Get your tickets guys.

**The power of performance:** Denyce told me in no uncertain terms that she "certainly believes that theatre has the power to change the world". Fuck yeah, Denyce. While we can walk through life, unengaged and unmoved, the theatre is the perfect environment to create an immersive experience, to sit an audience down and encourage them to laugh, or have a wee cry.

**Words of wisdom:** "If I could speak to a younger version of myself, I would say... Stay active. Keep practicing, keep making. It is definitely hard work, but I know that the people surrounding me in the industry are there because they are doing exactly what it is that they love." ■

THE WHOLEHEARTED IS RUNNING FROM THE 1ST UNTIL THE 10TH OF APRIL AT THE Q THEATRE.

# Assimilation Week: England

HOBBIT ON TOUR WITH ELOISE SIMS

"Sometimes I feel like we're really not embracing English culture enough," my Aussie flat-mate Georgie says solemnly.

"What makes you say that?" I ask, biting into a TimTam from a care package from home. We're sitting around our kitchen table listening to Crowded House, Googling pavlova recipes for an upcoming dinner.

"No reason." She shrugs, looking pointedly at my outfit. It's laundry day. Accordingly, I'm wearing a pair of jandals, gym leggings, and a Bar 101 T-shirt I found somewhere. (Side note – if you're a Bar 101 worker reading this, you should almost definitely pay me for my international promotion services.)

I admit (privately) that she has a point. In England, I wear being a New Zealander as a badge of honour. For instance, if my politics group couldn't tell I was a Kiwi from my vaguely nasal accent, they certainly could after I had a quiet outburst over the merits of the MMP voting system.

*"I don't understand." I hissed to my project partner. "Why would you stick with your utterly crap Westminster system? Why?"*

*"...Are you not from round here, then?" He asked, looking vaguely panicked at my threatening expression directed towards Literally All Of Britain.)*

"We *could* try and fit in more." I concede to Georgie, finishing the TimTam. "Embrace the culture, all of that. Go and do some proper English things."

"What else are we on exchange for?" She asks, before switching on a Hamish and Andy podcast.

And so, the idea of Assimilation Week was born. Five days of many, many different British cultural items. One massive attempt for me to try and integrate fully into what it really meant to *be* English. I was amped. I was ready. This is a daily document of my thoughts during this tough and tragic time.

**Monday:** I've realized something. I actually genuinely hate tea. Tea is just crap water. Tea is just terrible, watery, dark leaf sludge with a bit of milk that all of Britain is obsessed with. What is this? Why? Just why? This is the nation that once conquered half the known world. Why, this is the country of greats! Charles Dickens! Caitlin Moran! John Oliver! This is the country that now has a power surge at 9:00 every night from people putting on electric kettles. I'm so very disappointed.

*Update:* I've had three cups (to try and encourage myself to like it) and it feels like I might pee blood so I probably need to stop now.

**Tuesday:** After my absolute failure to enjoy tea in any capacity, I resolve to try something different.

Two (male) friends invite me to see Exeter FC vs. Carlisle United. I accept. Football, right? The beautiful game! Now I just have to pretend to understand it.

*Update:* They ask me what team I support. "Manchester United," I say, hesitantly.

I may have made this choice based entirely on my childhood love of *Bend It Like Beckham*.

They shake their head in disgust. "Shocking performance against Sunderland."

I blink. "Oh... yeah, right. Yeah. No. Terrible. What an...awful display."

"I mean, what was Rooney thinking?"

I shrug. "Well, he just wasn't, was he? That's his problem. All over. Um. Yeah. Just er, on the topic... Where do we get chips from?"

**Wednesday:** Listen to me very carefully. I've done it. I've uncovered the missing link between humans and demi-gods. I've found the next step in our evolution as a race. Yes, ladies and gentlemen. This will ensure the progress of mankind for decades to come. It is hope. It is power. It brings tears to my eyes, just to think of it.

The British have invented something called cheesy chips.

It's simple. Beautiful. Dramatic. You take a knob of Cheddar, grate it over a box full of chips, and somehow, you open the door to Paradise.

My God.

**Thursday:** "So if I'm trying to integrate into Britain fully," I say to my Brazilian friend in a tutorial, "what should I be doing differently?"

She pauses and assesses me. "Huh. Probably listen to Radiohead."

"Radiohead?"

"Yeah, Radiohead. You know... how you say, I'm A Creep?"

"Are you?"

"No! It's a song!" She slaps my wrist. "In Britain – meeting British people – you know, they say, everything is awful, blah. The whole country is sad. All the time. Even the weather is sad."

She has a point. Today, the Tesco cashier sighed loudly when he saw me approach his till with a tuna sandwich. And the weather, as my German friend beautifully put it, "is just one big giant cloud. Always."

"In British minds – everything is terrible. Aside from Radiohead!" She gives me a thumbs-up. "They love Radiohead. Go listen."

Intrigued, I find *OK Computer* on Spotify, and plug my headphones in.

*Update:* Everything is awful. Living is pain. Death is inevitable.

I've been thinking about my traumatic childhood for twenty minutes.

I didn't even have a traumatic childhood.

**Friday:** My flat-mate found me lying under my desk, having an existential crisis, which could only be resolved with the promise of cheesy chips.

I'm never listening to Radiohead ever again.

To celebrate the end of my Assimilation Week, and to try and prevent me thinking about the impossibility of escaping death, we're in a bar. We've had a few pints, they've played Danza Kuduro, and we've danced to it like the strange and awkward white people we are. I need to pee, so I tap my friend on the back. "Bathroom trip?"

She nods her assent. To the left of the drinks bar, I spot a black door that looks vaguely toilet-esque. "There!" I tell her, pulling her with me. Thank God. I'm absolutely busting.

We step into a dark room. It's cold, filled with rows of metal shelves and cardboard boxes crammed with crates of beer. My bladder aches with disappointment. I walk forward to investigate, and find nothing but concrete walls.

"This isn't the bathroom." I turn to say, laughing.

I'm confronted with a black door. My friend is nowhere to be seen. All I can hear is faint music playing from outside.

"Oi!" I yell, annoyed now, grabbing the door handle.

It doesn't budge. I rattle it. I kick it.  
It doesn't move an inch.

It's locked.

Oh my God.

Unknown to me, my friend had seen a security guard, who yelled at her to "get away from our storeroom!" Upon her running away, he then locked the door – with me inside.

Eventually, I get out after an hour, after utilizing a skylight in my dramatic escape. Movies will be made about it. Oscars will be given. In a flash of engineering genius, I climbed up the shelves, shimmed out of the skylight, got down a fire escape – and then went immediately to the chip shop to recover.

I think Assimilation Week went well. Thanks for asking. ■

ELOISE IS ONE OF THOSE GIRLS WHO MADE A SHOW OUT OF HATING JUSTIN BIEBER WHEN SHE WAS TWELVE YEARS OLD. NOT MUCH HAS CHANGED. SHE LOVES JOHN OLIVER, PICTURES OF LABRADORS, AND WILL BE TRAPPED IN ENGLAND FOR THE NEXT SIX MONTHS. PLEASE FOLLOW HER ON TWITTER (SHE WANTS TO TELL HER MUM SHE'S FAMOUS): @SIMSELOISE



# The Pop Culture Wars

SEX, DRUGS & ELECTORAL ROLLS  
WITH CURWEN ARES ROLINSON

*"We know things are bad. Worse than bad – they're crazy. It's like everything everywhere is going crazy, so we don't go out anymore. We sit in the house and slowly the world we're living in is getting smaller, and all we say is: 'Please, at least leave us alone in our living rooms. Let me have my toaster and my TV and my steel-belted radials and I won't say anything. Just leave us alone.'... Well I'm not gonna leave you alone! I want you to get MAD!"* - Howard Beale, *Network*.

One of the most insidious trends in our modern pop culture today is the active drive towards depoliticization of our media and personal spaces.

It might have started out as that pithy (if objectionable) maxim about refraining in polite company from discussing religion, sex or politics at the dinner table (which, as an associate pointed out, often leaves precious little of substance to actually converse about) but the creed has since taken on a life of its own, seemingly cropping up wherever mere mortals congregate to interact or to exchange ideas.

Perhaps we're afraid of having our own beliefs challenged. Or possibly, the sheer vast weight of the task at hand – of changing our extant political status quo which strangles the polis and economy like a many-tentacled eldritch abomination – causes us to balk at discussing how we might accomplish a meaningful alteration to our circumstances. Maybe the constant and continual buffoonery of our political classes and erstwhile champions has caused a collective feeling of revulsion wherever and whenever their clammy, vote-grasping paws and faces turn up unexpected, unannounced and apparently unwanted.

However it's happened, and whatever this might have transpired, the result is the same. People make active attempts to forcibly get the politics out of their pop culture.

I first noticed this sad and sorry trend on one of those pages which conglomerates humorous images from Tumblr, and the like. Somebody had mashed up the images of widely reviled *Harry Potter* petty-tyrant Dolores Umbridge with a well-known political figure. I think it might have been Donald Trump (although I've also seen local renditions featuring Paula Bennett and Anne Tolley). People were going a bit nuts about this, claiming that the image represented something of a defilement. Not merely because an odious association with a real-life arguable villain apparently was viewed as unbearably tainting people's perceptions of a fantasy bete-

noir but because the integration of politics and somebody's pet fantasy milieu represented a CONTAMINATION of that series' integrity, and ought to be put a stop to forthwith.

Now, a moment's consideration of this situation will reveal a number of obvious absurdities.

First up, the *Harry Potter* series is eminently political. The characters encounter more Ministerial staff per novel than are habitually run into every episode of *The Thick Of It*. Aspects of civil society, the civil rights movement and civic organization are lovingly invoked and semi-satirized through features like Hermione's "Society for the Promotion of Elfish Welfare" (S.P.E.W.). Neoliberal educational "reform" by meddling bureaucrats is directly invoked with the aforementioned umbrage. An active promulgation of the highly political values of egalitarianism and anti-racism to a generation of kids is what these books represent.

Ultimately, trying to claim that politics would 'contaminate' this milieu makes about as much sense as suggesting that the fresh water from a stream might mar the mighty salt-water ocean.

But it's not as if it's merely an issue confined to the *Harry Potter* fandom, or the insipid depths of Tumblr – and those who comment on same. Pretty much everywhere I've been, the same problem emerges.

To take a fictional universe with which I'm rather more directly familiar (never having finished the *Harry Potter* series myself), I encountered a similar phenomenon within the (much older, more bearded) 40k fandom. Because apparently, aficionados of a setting wherein one of the lead apocalyptic threats to the wellbeing of humanity is an explicit Margaret Thatcher expy – the Ork warlord Ghazghkull Mag Uruk Thraka – heaven forbid someone attempt to make political jokes with the source-material.

Of course, the danger with this active-depoliticization/anti-politicization strain of thinking isn't merely to be found in attempting to create nonpolitical 'safe spaces' in our popular culture where people can be free to enjoy their apathy unmolested.

No, it's worse than that.

The next stage in this insidious agenda is the conscious depoliticization of works and spaces that were previously, eminently political. The best example for this that I can think of is probably the way John Constantine's stories are now written in the *Hellblazer* series of comics. If you're unacquainted, suffice to say that right throughout the series' late 80s and 90s run, *Hellblazer* basically ran on politics almost as much as it did magic, trenchcoats, cigarettes, and cynicism. As one reviewer put it: "There were bankers as literal demons, aristocrats hunting the poor on horseback [...] Ellis used his all too brief run on the comic to savage the crushing disappointment that was New Labour and it was glorious, if painful."

"Strip that element away and you're left with a vaguely interesting, sarcastic wizard who calls people 'mate'."

And that's what happened, as an effective act of literary vandalism. The comic's latest incarnation (imaginatively titled "Constantine: The Hellblazer") eschews political content in favour of slumming it with the rest of the DC universe's stable of superheroes.

Clearly, there are artistic-aesthetic consequences and casualties to be had as a direct result of this quixotic drive for depoliticization. One could only imagine how much more pedestrian and two-dimensional (if creative and pretty in their linguistic artifice) the works of say, Shakespeare, might be if shorn of their political context and sensibilities.

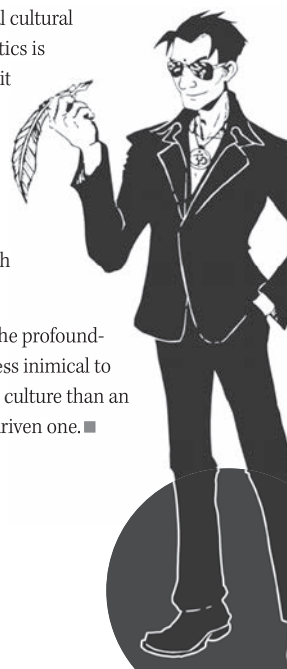
So what does this lead to? What's the overall and all-up consequence of this relentlessly creeping paroxysm of confining and constraining political symbolism and dialogue to the darkest, most out-of-sight fringes?

Apathy. Enforced, inculcated apathy wherein taking a side or holding an opinion which might run the risk of playing your part in changing the world is drowned out by a stuttering, whispering susurrus of silence.

Works of literature and kernels of pop culture help to inspire and to motivate 'the masses' (and, for that matter, people who like to imagine themselves to be among 'the elite'). We help ourselves to feel different feelings, see different things, and examine the world differently when we take in the perspective of great authors (or illustrators) and their fictional character contrivances alike. Garbing important ideas – or sentiments worthy of transmission – in the clothing of our favourite figures and enmeshing them in the semi-whole cloth of fabricated universes where we like to play is thus less a 'defilement' than an 'apotheosis'. A recognition that the value and worthwhileness of these characters and settings is of such sufficient importance that they can and should impact our tangible, real world outside the confines of their pages or celluloid screen-frames.

In an age where the neoliberal assault on both democracy and our fundamental cultural cornerstone of caring about politics is more rampant than ever before, it has never been more necessary than it is now to adopt and use symbols and narratives that people *actually* care about to try and influence them towards those things which they *should* have regard for.

I somehow severely doubt that the profoundly apathetic society will be any less inimical to the creation of great art and pop culture than an archetypal totalitarian/money-driven one. ■



John Key's ultimately doomed attempt to change our flag has been pilloried by most of those on the Left as a waste of money.

The classic straw man argument – the idea that the \$26 million that was spent on the referendum could have been better spent on a multitude of social causes – has revealed the tension at the core of our nation's psyche.

On one hand, we have the alleged corporatisation of our country – our Prime Minister has spent most of his two-and-a-bit terms focused on making New Zealand a major (or at the very least, less minor) player on the international stage. This internal recalibration of our national priorities manifested itself externally in a campaign to rebrand: in Key's mind, our newly competitive, unashamedly capitalist nation needed to swap the stubbies and Swandri for a nice suit. On the other, we have our roots as a social laboratory, a nation small (and wealthy) enough to be free from ills of the same magnitude as those in bigger places, a place where we look out for the little guy because we *are* the little guy. This version of our country doesn't see the need for the nice suit; the stubbies and Swandri are perfect for the kind of work we do.

*"New Zealand is staring down the barrel of adulthood and the abyss stares back – no amount of back patting and summertime barbecues are going to make this transition any easier."*

This tension was cast in a harsh light through the prism of our flag debate. However our internal identity crisis has been playing out for much longer than that. A prime example is the housing crisis in Auckland. We want to be a big player; we want our commercial centre to be a true hub of industry, innovation and business. This means that our commercial centre starts to be viewed as the place for opportunities by people who live here, and the place to invest big money in by people who don't. Without a big population, Auckland can't be the big city it wants to be – more people means more businesspeople, as well as more people working in the service and hospitality industries that power any big city. Similarly, how can Auckland profess to *want* to attract big money while simultaneously bridle at the enormous amounts of cash being injected into our housing market by property investors?

The flag is just the vessel that enables us to talk about these fears. Our adolescence is over: we've been through our longhaired hippie phase and are ready to get a haircut and a real job. Naturally, we're scared – scared that it'll be harder than we think, scared that our childhood dreams won't ever really materialise (and that our lives will mirror the subject

matter of every good Bruce Springsteen song), and scared of the toll it will take on our family and health. New Zealand is staring down the barrel of adulthood and the abyss stares back – no amount of back patting and summertime barbecues are going to make this transition any easier.

The questions raised by the flag debate draw attention to that left unasked: what does it mean to be a non-white New Zealander in 2016? Most of the pro-change discourse centred on us finally eradicating the Union Jack, that symbol of colonial oppression, from our national sign. It was hard not to feel as though the anti-British sentiment was only being expressed by white folks *for* white folks – I don't recall any mainstream immigrant voices gaining much traction. This is why the decision to retain the current flag hasn't affected me as much as it probably should. After all, I'm an immigrant to this country and from another nation that was ruled by the British for more than a hundred years.

In theory, I'm the ideal advocate for a new, forward-looking flag. In practice, the flag debate only rammed home the distance between born-and-bred Kiwis and "new" Kiwis. In discussions with my friends and in the media it seemed as though the only people allowed to participate in the debate were those who could trace the ancestors they lost at Gallipoli or Passchendaele; who could talk movingly about their family's transition over the years from the quarter-acre pavlova paradise to the subdivided central Auckland townhouse. For those of us who have only been New Zealanders for a handful of years, the message was clear – this wasn't our debate. We had to sit this one out. We were to feel as little a claim to authenticity as we're made to feel when we attend an Anzac service or go to an All Blacks game: the flag debate, like those two bastions of Kiwiana identity, were occasions to be asked – overtly or subliminally – where we were "really from, mate?"

This is why I watched these events unfold from a distance. It was fascinating to see this nation realise what a global world (and a desire to be a big player in that world) would do for the values that Kiwis hold dear. It was fascinating to see the next great shift in our national identity, and see the nation wrangle with what it means to be a New Zealander today. ■





## Playing A Trump Card

WITH ADEEL MALIK

I write this as it has become seemingly inevitable that Donald Trump will be the Republican nominee.

A moment almost reminiscent of George Bush Jr winning his second term. American politics have once again become the joke we all thought it used to be (pre-Obama). And most of the political commentary outside the US goes thus far. It is the journalistic equivalent of pointing and laughing. It's being Nelson. By now we all have seen clips of Samantha Bee or whoever trying to reason with Trump supporters and failing.

I am not trying to excuse the bigotry that

Trump or some of his supporters spew, but I also don't think those people were born morally inferior. They like Trump because of a narrative, an economic and political one: that politicians have failed the people. But why does he hold sway? It's all about the conditions.

So what are the demographics that Trump excels in – amongst his Republican cohorts? Men, people aged over 45, those who have a high school degree or less. To an extent I am cherry picking my data but this isn't an academic journal and I think I am giving an accurate outline of a generic Trump supporter\*. On Super Tuesday Trump did better in counties that had a higher mortality rate for white over-45 year olds. Trump excels at representing the working class individuals other politicians have forgotten. As Jeff Guo for The Washington Post noted:

*"The fraction of people in the county who are working. After controlling for other factors, the percentage of people with jobs was a significant predictor of the Trump vote share. If an additional 12 percent of adults had jobs (which is roughly the gap between the 75th and 25th percentiles), Trump would have lost about two percentage points of the vote in the primaries."*

*The decline in manufacturing. In the early 2000s, increased trade with China delivered another whammy to American manufacturers. The data show that the places that lost a lot of*

*manufacturing jobs since 1999 were also more likely to vote for Trump on Super Tuesday."*

America has become the first developed nation to experience an increase in mortality rates for large segments of its population – whites 45-54. The median income in 2014 (adjusted for inflation) is the same as it was in 1996 – but in 1996 it was going up, now it's going down.

So do these people just vote for Trump because he is a bigot, a way to express their id? NO. Trump makes more than bold statements, and if you listen to his speeches, trade and immigration seem to be recurring themes. I can see why someone who saw their job being outsourced would oppose free-trade deals, or a gardener who hates immigrants because the immigrant is willing to work for five bucks an hour with no bathroom breaks.

I don't think Trump has the answer to America's economic ails but I also hate the smug self-congratulatory reporting that the Trump campaign has spawned in the rest of the world. America has structural inequalities that no politician has been able to resolve, so now some people are voting for the outsider. Seeing Trump supporters solely as racist or stupid is missing the larger political narrative at play. ■

\*This was the data from the Virginia primary – just happened to be the data I came across first. The other candidates were Ruio, Cruz, Casich and Carson.

## Last Night: Or Why I Write for a Student Publication

WITH ADITYA VASUDEVAN

See the boy. He is brown and thin. He walks with a limp and without a purpose. The eagles of Wellington airport circle above like the apparitions of some LSD-fueled delirium. Why do they not move? His hungover body hobbles as if detached from his hungover brain. He sits down and unhooks his bag from his shoulder and it thuds to the ground. He shuts his eyes and fingers his temples. Images of last night swim in his mind like the movements of a leviathan weaving in and out of the unending abyss.

I was drunk, cried the boy.

\*

A mechanical bull stares dead eyed and motionless. Flaxen sombreros sit on a bar counter. In the corner of his ear the gurgling of the machine begins. Smiling faces jostle for a chance to mount the bull. One succeeds. He casts a leg

over the metal body and ends up splayed over the bull with limbs akimbo. The crowd watches. Their eyes moist with admiration and envy. Nobody wants to be here and nobody wants to leave. When he falls from the bull he falls slowly. The eyes of the bull take on a sinister affectation.

'I could do better than that,' is what one spindly figure says to the other.

The boy smiles softly and sips from the glass. What man is such a coward that he would not rather fall once than remain forever tottering?

That's your notion. Between the wish and the thing the bull lies waiting.

\*

The Queen drowns at the bottom of a glass of red wine as the crowd sings their song. A wine bottle is a looking glass through which to see your future suffering. He looks down at the glass. The acknowledgement of the justice of a hangover is the wellspring of euphoric drinking. It poisons the chalice with temptation and so poisons your mind with rebellion. He tilts his head back and empties the

scarlet liquid down his throat.

They dine to celebrate a great victory. When he retrieves the Queen his eyes are bloodshot. He looks crazed and twisted.

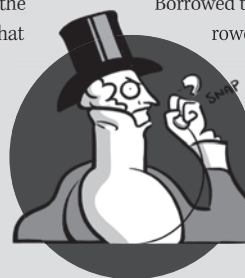
\*

He climbs the scaffolding surrounding a church. Up and up and up. The moon hides its face behind the great spire. He looks over the city. Borrowed time and borrowed world and borrowed eyes with which to sorrow it.

\*

He sits at the airport. It is as if the memories he can't recall never happened. He lost his suit jacket. He bruised his knee. His phone did not work. But there are no absolutes in human misery

and things can always get worse. If he had not fallen out of the bed in the morning he would have missed his flight. No place with any sense would want to welcome this man. Yet he finds himself here. These pages are the spiritual home of the broken and the damned. So he writes for them. The weight of no expectation drives him. ■



# Cuts to the Arts: Stupid or Sinister?

WITH ANA HARRIS

In relative terms New Zealand is a great place to live. The government seems pretty trustworthy. Our elections are timetabled, polling booths aren't rigged, we've got access to publically funded healthcare, education, and Instagram-worthy beaches to boot.

While Europe faces the largest migrant crisis since the Second World War and many parts of Africa and the Middle East remain embroiled in violent conflict, trending issues in New Zealand include whether to sever ties with the Union Jack and the current state of the dairy industry.

In reality, New Zealand's public sector is increasingly corrupt. In 2012 and 2013, the Corruption Perceptions Index published by Transparency International ranked us the least corrupt country in the world. The CPI generally defines corruption as "the misuse of public power for private benefit". In 2014 we slipped behind Denmark, and Finland and Sweden clambered ahead in 2015 leaving us in fourth place. The government is particularly lacking when it comes to providing access to information, with journalists and members of the public reporting rising manipulation of the Official Information Act. Our PM has publicly admitted to the use of intentional delays in releasing requests as a political tactic. Muddy waters around the TPPA, the Auckland Convention Centre deal and Sercos handling of Mount Eden Prison have also affected corruption stats, and New Zealand may be facing a further drop next year with the fall-out from the Saudi sheep scandal.

Given the decline in political credibility, we need checks and balances on politicians more than ever. Our judiciary can't strike down laws as unconstitutional, and the opinions of prominent media commentators consistently fail to diverge with those of the National government (looking at you, Mike Hosking). So who can we look to?

The traditional role of the university is to act as 'the critic and conscience of society' so, as students, it seems like a safe bet. According to *Academic Freedom Aotearoa*, lecturers and students have both a right and a duty to "always question and test received wisdom". Universities, especially arts departments, are essential in equipping citizens with the ability to criticise authority. Despite what high school careers counsellors might tell you, the best thing about a degree in politics, or history, or sociology is not the 'transferable skills' that prepare you for the workplace, but the power to question the status quo. An uninformed populace has little choice but to accept policies handed down by our betters in the Beehive. Surely a government aiming for transparency would support informed dissent?

On the face of it, the government's encouragement of STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) is to assist graduates in attaining well-paid careers in the midst of a very difficult job market. The corollary is increasing disapproval of the arts, which is perhaps unsurprising given our Education Minister graduated with a degree in zoology and went on to become a self-made millionaire. Steven Joyce evidently looks down on arts degrees because they're 'unproductive' – apart from fees the only thing making money in a humanities department is the odd publication, a miniscule drop in the ocean compared to the revenue potential of software development or the latest breakthrough in medical research. Rather than emphasising the university's role as 'critic and conscience of society', Joyce seems more interested in transforming it into a technical institute.

In 2012, the government put \$42 million extra funding into engineering at tertiary education institutes and \$17 million into science courses, simultaneously freezing its funding for other subjects. Stuart McCutcheon, our vice-chancellor, pointed out the additional money was paid as a bulk sum for the university to allocate as it pleased. Initially couching the budgetary shift in terms of addressing a "skills crisis", Joyce switched gear and threatened to force the university's hand. "If they want us to be more directive, I'm more than willing," he said. "I'm watching them really closely

to make sure they do respond to what the market wants, and if they don't, I can go and tell them how many they should enrol for each department."

There's no denying engineering graduates have better salary prospects than their counterparts studying humanities or social sciences. They're also more likely to invent cool stuff that other people want to buy. But conceptualising tertiary education solely in terms of market-driven thinking is stupid and alarming. The arts teach us how societies develop, economies and governments function, arguments are rebuffed, authorities questioned, and existing structures challenged. These skills are not only useful in an employment context, they're essential in allowing us to critically evaluate government behaviour.

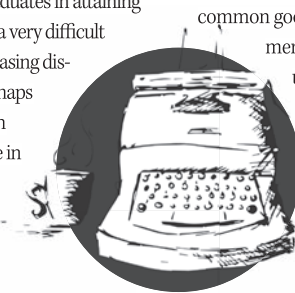
In 2013, expat South African writer JM Coetzee wrote: "All over the world, as governments retreat from their traditional duty to foster the common good and reconceive of themselves as mere managers of national economies,

universities have been coming under pressure to turn themselves into training schools equipping young people with the skills required by a modern economy... Allowing the transient needs of the economy to define the goals of higher education is a misguided and short-sighted policy. A democratic society, and even

'a vigorous national economy', needs critically literate citizens who are competent to explore and interrogate the assumptions behind the paradigms of national and economic life reigning at any given moment."

The lack of funding afforded to arts departments has resulted in less autonomy for academics. Their salaries have fallen behind those of lawyers and civil servants. UoA is increasingly overrun by centralised administration in attempts to make uni 'more efficient'. It's also no longer a legal requirement for students and staff to be represented on university councils. During a Parliamentary Debate, Grant Robertson alleged that the government provided no justification for making the changes to university governance, saying "there have been comprehensive submissions from everybody involved in the tertiary sector to say that these changes are unnecessary, ill-considered, and inconsistent with international norms and best practice."

Perhaps the government's stance on arts education is merely unwise, throwing the baby out with the bathwater by focusing too heavily on economic outcomes. On the other hand, an obedient population with no tendency towards criticism or debate would be very convenient for our politicians amidst deteriorating corruption statistics. But that all sounds far too sinister, so maybe we should find another arbitrary national symbol to redesign instead. Time to replace the kiwi, anyone? ■



*"Despite what high school careers counsellors might tell you, the best thing about a degree in politics, or history, or sociology is not the 'transferable skills' that prepare you for the workplace, but the power to question the status quo."*

# Notes From the Future, Beware of the Dogs

LIFE IS TOO LONG WITH SHMULY LEOPOLD

*"First they came for the tutors, but I said nothing because I was not a tutor. Then they came for the short loans collection, but I said nothing because I was not in the short loans collection. Then they came for the course readers, but I said nothing because I was not a course reader. Then they came for me, and there was no one left to say anything."* -Professor J Eucharist, moments prior to being shot by the Vice Chancellor's Academic Productivity Squad, 2021.

It all started in 2017. After the University bought the Lion Brewery and spent the better part of a hundred billion dollars building a complex labyrinth for the Vice Chancellor's half-man half-sheep son (the result of some of his veterinary "experimentation"), Stuart McCutcheon, giggling hysterically, drove a wrecking ball into the Rialto Cinema, declaring that the space could be "used better" and that "STEM subjects get more funding than films". It was the beginning of the end.

Roving gangs of bulldozers began to destroy everything in central Auckland. Pulling down building after building, erecting thousands upon thousands of hundred-storey commerce and engineering facilities. The bulldozers cared nothing for human life, crushing and demolishing vast piles of carcasses in their lust to build new glassy edifices. All this University expansion came at a cost, of course. Space had to be used efficiently. After all, the whole of Auckland is only so big. Arts doesn't bring in the sort of money required to build the McCutcheon Business District, or the Steven Joyce STEM Mastabatorium. They started by getting rid of the textbooks.

Anyone caught graduating with an arts degree was taken out behind Old Choral Hall and summarily executed. The only escape was to continue with a post-graduate degree, the only post-graduate major left in arts being the Applied Management and Productivity Studies degree. But just to remind you that you weren't contributing to the economy, the Vice Chancellor, the Chancellor, and Steven Joyce would take turns anally fingering all arts graduates.

Things only got worse from there. The expanse of the Vice Chancellor's massive building schedule, reaching well beyond the Bombay Hills by 2020, meant that funding was tight for all non-building related expenses. No more subscriptions to academic databases. After all, they don't "produce things". They cut all funding for cleaning services. Toilets became pre-pay, and any library fines whatsoever meant complete banishment from all lavatories. But with no funding for EFTPOS machines in the library, and certainly none for returns slots, there was no way to either return books, or pay fines. Effluent began to fill the lecture halls and tutorials rooms.

Professor of Classics and Ancient History Matthew

Trundle complained that these "shitty" conditions were no place for academic research, or the teaching of ancient languages. Trundle was immediately beheaded. All talk of ancient languages was banned. Latin, Greek, Egyptian and other dead language books were incinerated. "We'll finish what the Christians started" declared an increasingly bald and obese Stuart McCutcheon from his bullet-proof-glass-protected podium atop the Clock Tower. He fired a rifle at passing humanities lecturers, laughing and crying.

Soon John Key passed the No Arts or Critical Education Anywhere Bill 2021. The arts buildings sustained repeated terrorist attacks from the Young Nats, not satisfied with the lacklustre police executions of social science Professors, or the fact that up to this point the entire History Department had managed to remain hidden in the tunnels under Albert Park, researching by candle light, and wondering if all this horror was real or just textuality.

All lecturers were given an extra week to live if they video recorded four courses worth of material. Promptly all lectures became available on YouTube.

The arts academics were killed. Except the history department of course, who remained hidden, scurrying and starving, under Albert Park. Students were informed that classes would now be held in their own homes; all in Hamilton, which was now called the Fuck Learning Get A Job Cunts Student Village. All content was available online. All marking would

now be done via random allocation based on "donations" to the university.

As the ranking of the university and the country at large began to drop, the government and Chancellor became excessively paranoid. Anyone seen reading from paper had their eyes clawed out. Every remaining book was burnt by 2024.

Steven Joyce was soon outed by New Zealand Herald Critic of Culture Mike Hosking for having done a long distance arts diploma. Unable to bear the shame he shot himself on the stairs outside Parliament.

As to what happened next, no one is quite sure. The University declared there were no longer funds for electricity across New Zealand. Public works ceased. All infrastructure collapsed. Auckland remained a gargantuan testament to the glory of a productive and market-focused education system.

In the year 2026 the Vice Chancellor, in his final act in that role, and as the last man for whom there was available funding, let off a thermonuclear device in the Albert Park Accountancy Fountain in an attempt to root out those academics still alive.

Fin. ■



the people to blame.

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